

RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF ENGLISH IDEOLOGY
IN GLOBALIZING SOUTH KOREA

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how the South Korean president-elect Lee Myung-bak's public English education reform plan in 2008 revealed a shift in top-down delineation of language ideology as a mechanism of national competitiveness. The state historically allocated the Korean and English languages as "Korean body" and "Western utensil," respectively, to frame Korean as an inherent and genealogical character of the nation and English as a necessary but foreign tool. However, qualitative content analysis on Korean news articles reporting on President Lee's 2008 public English education reform plan showed that the PTC's English ideology deviated from previous iterations of confining English as a Western utensil. Instead, Lee's reform plan outlined an eventual Korean-English bilingual nation where speaking English was to become a normative repertoire congruent with Korean identity. Situated within other studies on the evolving nature of Korean identity, this thesis reveals that Korea's once considered static linguistic identity is showing signs of dislodging as the state continues to pursue national competitiveness in the globalizing world.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

On January 22, 2008, Chairwoman Lee Kyung-suk of the Presidential Transition Committee (PTC)—tasked with formulating a transition plan for the newly-elected President Lee Myung-bak—stated that the PTC “will focus on the issue of English education as a national task for the next five years by benchmarking the countries where English is an official language.”¹ In the coming days, Chairwoman Lee and other members of the PTC gradually unveiled public English education reforms including teaching English in English (TEE) and teaching non-English subjects in English (“English Immersion,” 영어몰입; yŏngŏmorip). According to Chairwoman Lee, the incoming administration’s public English education reform will enable all citizens to speak English, which in turn will bolster national competitiveness in the globalizing world.

Chairwoman Lee’s perception that English skills are necessary for enhancing national competitiveness is not new in South Korea (henceforth Korea). However, Korea’s previous drive toward national competitiveness had confined English as a “Western utensil” in the “Korean body, Western utensils” ideology, which is a “belief that the Korean body can ingest foreign ideas without altering the basic structure of the Korean body.”² This meant English was an inherently foreign language incompatible with Korean linguistic identity and only learned out of necessity for competitiveness. On the other hand, the Korean language was the epitome of the

¹ Chosun Ilbo, “han’guk p’an t’oiksihŏmhan’guk p’an t’oiksihŏm naonda,” *Chosun Ilbo*, January 23, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2008/01/22/2008012200957.html.

² Gi-Wook Shin, *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics, and Legacy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 207 quoted in C. Fred Alford, *Think No Evil: Korean Values in the Age of Globalization* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 151.

“Korean body,” a sole linguistic representation of an ethnically and linguistically homogeneous nation known for its “linguistic patriotism and linguistic nationalism.”³ The PTC’s mentioning of benchmarking countries that use English as an official language was an unprecedented step in a nation that prides in its national language. What was the PTC’s beliefs about English and to what extent was English a “Western utensil” in the view of the PTC?

This thesis examines the PTC’s beliefs about English expressed when it promoted its public English education reform, gauging the extent to which these ideas constitute a potential challenge to Korea’s traditional mechanism of pursuing national competitiveness. I argue that the PTC continued the precedent of believing English is a necessary tool for Korea’s national competitiveness. However, the PTC’s articulation on its beliefs about English revealed contrast to existing beliefs about English that had confined English as a “Western utensil.” The PTC’s public English education reform plan envisaged a Korean-English bilingual nation, where all citizens are not only capable of speaking English, but speaking English amongst Koreans was a normative repertoire. This thesis does not argue that English became equal to Korean or part of the Korean body. Nevertheless, the PTC’s words and actions clearly illustrated Korea’s changing attitude toward English as they revealed the PTC-led reconfiguration long-established beliefs on English. Once considered impenetrable and static linguistic identity showed signs of dislodging as Korea immersed further into globalization.

³ Ross King, “North and South Korea,” In *Language & National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 232.

Literature Review

Korean Body, Western Utensils

The “Korean body, Western utensils” ideology, also known as “Eastern spirit, Western technology,” has its roots in modernization efforts undertaken by Japan, China, and Korea in nineteenth and twentieth century when these countries attempted to modernization in the wake of Western incursion. It is a belief that Western technology was necessary for modernization and national sovereignty but tradition should stay intact. In other words, Western ideas should be reformulated and made to fit one’s needs, which tended to be a pursuit for national competitiveness.

Several scholars of Korea have discussed the pursuit of national competitiveness in the era of globalization in the framework of “Korean body, Western utensils.” According to Gi-Wook Shin, the adherence to the Korean body, Western utensils ideology for the purpose of enhancing national competitiveness strengthened in the advent of globalization and is likely to continue. He equates ethnic nationalism to the Korean body, which is a “strong sense of unity and national pride” and “an organic, racialized, and the collectivistic notion of a nation based on common blood and shared ancestry,”⁴ and globalization as a Western utensil. On the other hand, the desire for national competitiveness is “how the politics of ethnic national identity have played out.”⁵ He argues that ethnic nationalism, which served as the unifying foundation for the state’s developmental policies during Korea’s rapid economic modernization period, actually strengthened during *Segyehwa*, the state-sponsored globalization movement led by the Kim

⁴ Gi-Wook Shin, *Ethnic Nationalism in Korea: Genealogy, Politics, and Legacy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 2, 11.

⁵ Ibid, 3

Young-sam administration in the 1990s, contrasting with the notion that globalization and increased transnational interconnectedness weaken national identity. According to Shin, the Kim administration urged the nation to unite under its ethnic homogeneity to protect and advance it. To do so, the administration appropriated globalization as a Western utensil. For Shin, this represents a salience of the Korean body, Western utensils ideology, or maintenance of “a familiar relationship between previous state development projects and discourse of nationalism.”⁶ Therefore, the repertoire of Korean body, Western utensils ideology continued well into globalization as the state utilized ethnic nationalism as the Korean body to reap the benefits that globalization could have for Korea while avoiding the threats it presented to the Korean nation.

On the contrary, C. Fred Alford argues that the Korean body, Western utensils ideology is a “collective fantasy” and an “illusion.”⁷ According to Alford, Koreans accept globalization and foreign ideas because they are necessary for national competitiveness, a crucial ingredient for national survival, under the pretense of the Korean body, Western utensils ideology. Koreans believe that globalization does not affect the Korean body as they are protected from “evil” globalization perceived as inherently threatening to the Korean body by their ability to integrate other people’s ideas and indigenize them without being influenced, or to adopt “the ways of the powerful without really being affected by them.”⁸ But Alford argues that this is only “a narcissistic defense against sadaejui,”⁹ or toadyism, and the Korean body, Western utensils ideology is incompatible with globalization. With globalization, he argues, Korea will become

⁶ Ibid, 205

⁷ C. Fred Alford, *Think No Evil: Korean Values in the Age of Globalization* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 150, 151.

⁸ Ibid. 150, 151.

⁹ Ibid. 151.

progressively more integrated with the global world order as exemplified by the impending neo-liberalization of its economic system, which was required by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a condition of a loan vital to the survival of Korea's economy in 1998. In particular, Koreans' view on relationships will change as the Korean body metabolizes globalization and subsequently changes the Korean body over time. He argues that as Korea becomes more integrated into the global economic order, Koreans' emphasis on traditional social relations, or *chǒng*, in which Koreans value strong personal ties, will change in favor of more impersonal relationships as they become more exposed to foreign culture, or Western in particular. Overall, Alford's view is that the Korean body has been constantly reinvented for thousands of years and it will continue to change with the impending wave of globalization.

Is English a Western utensil that may eventually change Korea and its national language? Korean linguistic identity, which will be discussed in Chapter 2, is often considered static, which in fact for about 5,000 years. However, it seems pretty clear that as there have been top-down and bottom-up efforts to introduce different perspectives on what had been considered Korean body. For example, public school textbooks, which can be imperative in materializing identity, changed from depicting Korean society as racially and ethnically homogeneous to depict Korea as a multicultural society.¹⁰ Additionally, non-ethnic Koreans also have played a role in changing the perception of homogeneous Korea. According to Yoonkyung Lee, the challenges by migrant workers, civic organizations, and academia and mass media buoyed by a large demographic shift from predominantly Korean majority to skyrocketing foreign population have led to favorable amendments for foreigners in government policies, which in turn are slowly changing the

¹⁰ Rennie Moon, "Globalisation and Citizenship Education: Diversity in South Korean Civics Textbooks," *Comparative Education* 49, no. 4 (2013).

perception of national identity based on the notion of ethnic homogeneity.¹¹ It seems that Korean body is up for debate as Korea faces changing landscapes along with globalization, which includes questioning of whether the Korean body is digesting English.

Language Ideology & Language Policy as Framework

This thesis utilizes language ideology and language policy as frameworks to examine the following dynamic between two languages in Korea: English as an economic instrument and Korean as the embodiment of Korean identity. According to Joseph Sung-Yul Park, language ideology is a “cognitive framework that constructs relationship of power deeply fundamental to society through the semiotics of language”¹² and “a fundamental key for understanding how language and society intersect with and constitute each other.”¹³ Korean and English languages are not just communicative tools in Korea. Speakers of a language speak, listen, read, and write, subsequently creating new meanings of the language in relation to their community. These new meanings have the potential to constitute society by “generating social hierarchies” through “selectively highlighting or making invisible group boundaries and identities.”¹⁴ In Korea, the ability to speak Korean is considered a marker of Korean identity. The ability to speak English is considered a marker of transnational competency. Although English is learned by everyone as it is part of the mandatory national education curriculum, Korea remains largely a monolingual nation. How they arrived at their respective roles involved imaginations of speakers interacting

¹¹ Yoonkyung Lee, “Migration, Migrants, and Contested Ethno-Nationalism in Korea,” *Critical Asian Studies* 41, no. 3 (2009).

¹² Joseph Sung-Yul Park, *The Local Construction of a Global Language, Ideologies of English in South Korea* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2009), 15.

¹³ Ibid. 13.

¹⁴ Ibid. 15

with society. Therefore, ideologies surrounding the two languages are not static, as a change in speakers or social structural conditions may instigate a change in language ideology.

The state possesses perhaps the most influential language ideology. It has the power to disseminate its language ideology through language policy that can lead to social change.

Therefore, the PTC's discourse on English provides a crucial insight into not only the state's English ideology but the kind of social change the PTC is attempting to bring about. According to Bernard Spolsky, the three main components of language policy are "the habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up its linguistic repertoire; its language beliefs or ideology – the beliefs about language and language use; and any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management."¹⁵ The state may select or eliminate public's language beliefs and enforce what it sees as fit through the public education system, which is a vital mechanism as a ground for building not only beliefs about language and language use, but national identity. Therefore, language policy is not only about promoting the "correct" usage of language but "a host of non-linguistic factors regularly account for any attempt by persons or groups to intervene in the language practices and the beliefs of other persons or groups."¹⁶ The power of language policy to engender language ideology and social change is evident in Korea as the state has been the primary mover of language ideology as the dominant architect of language policy in Korea. During Korea's economic modernization period in the 1970s, the Park Chung-hee administration pursued a nationalist agenda, using language policy to engender patriotism and unity by promoting linguistic nationalism and eliminating local dialects in public broadcasting to imbue a sense of unity, homogeneity, and dignity over the Korean speech community. Such strategy has played

¹⁵ Bernard Spolsky, *Language Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5.

¹⁶ Ibid. 6.

an integral role in formulating a part of the Korean body. In the same note, the PTC's public English education reform was also not entirely motivated by linguistic factors, but nationalistic agendas of a neoliberal-minded government.

English Ideology in Korea

Under the framework of language ideology, Joseph Park also has written extensively on English ideology in Korea from a sociolinguistic perspective. He explains English ideology in Korea in his own coinages, the ideologies of necessitation, self-deprecation, and externalization using the English as official language debate in the 1990s, media, and face-to-face interactions as the focus of his argument. The ideology of necessitation views English as a “valuable and indispensable language.”¹⁷ This ideology is commonly associated with regarding English as a global language that can connect a non-English speaking nation to the rest of the world; hence a necessary language for “economical, cultural, and/or political”¹⁸ power. The ideology of self-deprecation views English as difficult for Koreans to “use meaningfully despite the abundance of English education they receive.”¹⁹ This ideology holds that English is a language virtually unattainable for native Korean speakers. Additionally, even if one gains proficiency in English, one is expected to be modest and refrain from boasting about one's English skills. On the other hand, the ideology of externalization confines English as a Western utensil:

The ideology of externalization views English as an external language, or as a language of an Other, treating it as a language that

¹⁷ Ibid. 26.

¹⁸ Ibid. 26.

¹⁹ Ibid. 22.

is incongruent with and opposed to the identity of one's group. Thus close alignment with English can potentially imply a betrayal of one's identity and a disruption of the social order upon which that identity is based. The ideology of externalization, then, can be adopted to rationalize avoidance or a resistance to English. The identity in question here may be construed on various levels, but one that is commonly invoked is national and ethnic identity; nationalistic language attitudes clearly depend on this ideology in reinforcing the distinction between the local language of Korean and the global language of English.²⁰

According to Park, the ideology of externalization delineates English as a Western utensil, confining English as a tool. Even “a close approximation of American English” and “approximating a closer pronunciation to traditional native-speaker varieties” would be seen as boasting and incongruent with national language identity. Therefore, a Korean individual speaking in English, especially with an “authentic” (American) English pronunciation, which is the most desired “type” of English, with another Korean individual would imply a betrayal of the ideology of externalization. The ideology of externalization obliges Koreans, including individuals with English fluency, to “suppress” English and behave as illegitimate speakers of English because “a high level of English indexes a close alignment with English and the identity it represents.” In other words, incompetence highlights the Otherness of English, signaling the idea that English is an external language that does not belong to Koreans. Doctrinally, close

²⁰ Ibid. 26.

alignment with English by promoting English as an official language or increasing hours of English classes in public school curriculum would be criticized as an “act of betrayal” or toadyism (*sadaejūi*) as the ideology of externalization also comprises a colonial and post-colonial history. Based on nationalistic grounds, it would consider alignment with English a disloyal act and a betrayal of one’s identity. In sum, English is “a language from which one must distance oneself.”

English in Korea does not serve the purpose as a communicative vehicle through speaking or writing among Koreans. It is unspoken amongst Koreans unless it is for educational purposes or with English-speaking foreigners. Instead, it is a vehicle for social mobility or an anchor for social stability that purportedly measures an individual’s competitiveness by measuring one’s intelligence, competence, and transnational awareness. The increasingly interconnecting and globalizing world pits individuals against not only local, regional, and national competitors, but essentially everyone in the world. Hence, English is a tool that also enhances national competitiveness. These values assigned to English are even capable of breaking apart families, a phenomenon known as *kirogi* family, as parents struggle to provide opportunities for their children to learn English. Hence, Park argues that English as an “unspeakable” language.²¹ Not only was it an unspeakable language as a foreign tool not used to communicate due to its incongruence with Korean identity, but a source of anxiety, stress, and social problems arising from that incongruence. While Park does not provide the historical origins of English ideology in Korea, Chapter 2 will introduce three main events as a backdrop on English ideology.

²¹ Ibid. 2.

The ideologies of necessitation, self-deprecation, and externalization are not independent, but closely interrelated and often shared by various community members as “they are ideologies that are circulated together as a holistic conceptualization of English, inclusive of all the potential contradictions such ideologies may represent”²² and “manifest in the texts of both sides of the debate.”²³ One may believe that English is fundamentally foreign and against the idea of Koreanness but still acquire English as it is a necessary tool to “do nationalism better.”²⁴

It is true that the PTC’s promotion of its public English education reform plan was an espousal of the ideology of necessitation, that speaking English is a necessarily skill in the increasingly globalizing world. However, the PTC questioned the ideology of externalization by irrevocably marking English as no longer an unspeakable language. The PTC’s words and actions disclosed during its promotion of public English education paved a way for a bilingual platform that allows speaking English in Korea amongst Koreans with a “proper” English pronunciation without needing to suppress one’s speaking skills, which challenged the ideology of externalization in an unprecedented fashion.

Methodology

Source & Scope

The online newspaper articles for the qualitative content analysis were collected from two sources, Naver (www.naver.com) and Chosun Ilbo (www.chosun.com). Naver is the most popular Internet portal in Korea. According to media research by the Korea Advertisers Association, Naver was the most trusted (64.8%), the most influential (64.7%), and the most

²² Ibid. 126.

²³ Ibid. 84.

²⁴ Ibid. 86.

pleasant to use (63.2%) among online portal websites. Furthermore, its news section was the most popular and commonly read (63.9%), which was followed at a distance by the second most popular portal website Daum.²⁵ Print newspapers and television are still significant sources of news in Korea. However, online news content is quickly overtaking traditional media, as Korea has the highest online news readership in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) at 77%.²⁶ Naver's news portal aggregates major Korean news agencies, and I collected news articles from 11 news agencies that Naver categorizes as "daily," which consists of news agencies that publish news every day.²⁷ I collected news articles published by Chosun Ilbo on its website. In total, eight Korean newspaper media are included in this study; Hankyoreh, Seoul Shinmun, Kyunghyang Shinmun, Segye Ilbo, Dong-a Ilbo, Munhwa Ilbo, and Naver News (Naeil Shinmun). The sources for this thesis consist of a wide range of readers with a wide range of political tendencies. Table 1 shows the subscription, the number of articles collected for this study, and their political leaning.

²⁵ Ch'oe Hun-kil, "maech'e yŏnghyangnyŏk· silloedo 'KBS-MBC-neibŏ' sun: kwanggojuhyŏphoe, yŏronjosa palp'yo ... radio, MBC kangse," *Media Today*, October 21, 2010, accessed May 9, 2016, <http://www.mediatoday.co.kr/?mod=news&act=articleView&idxno=91413>.

²⁶ Kim T'ae-han, "ollain nyusŭgudongnyul han'gukhan'guk i tanyŏn ch'oegoch'oego," *Yonhap News*, May 25, 2010, accessed May 9, 2016, <http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/economy/2010/05/24/0303000000AKR20100524201600017.HTML>.

²⁷ Although the search function listed did not collect articles from four media; Hankook Ilbo, Chosun Ilbo, Kukmin Ilbo, and Joongang Ilbo for an unknown reason.

Table 1 Source Description

Daily Newspaper Media	Ranking by Circulation (2010)²⁸	Circulation (2010)²⁹	Articles on Public English Education Reform Plan	Political Leaning
Chosun Ilbo	1	1,392,547	56	Conservative
Dong-a Ilbo	3	866,665	12	Conservative
Hankyoreh	8	225,102	47	Progressive
Kyunghyang Shinmun	11	200,158	40	Progressive
Munhwa Ilbo	15	133,430	24	Conservative
Seoul Shinmun	16	116,541	31	Progressive
Segye Ilbo	18	658,549	26	Conservative
Naver News (Naeil Shinmun)	n/a	n/a	6	n/a

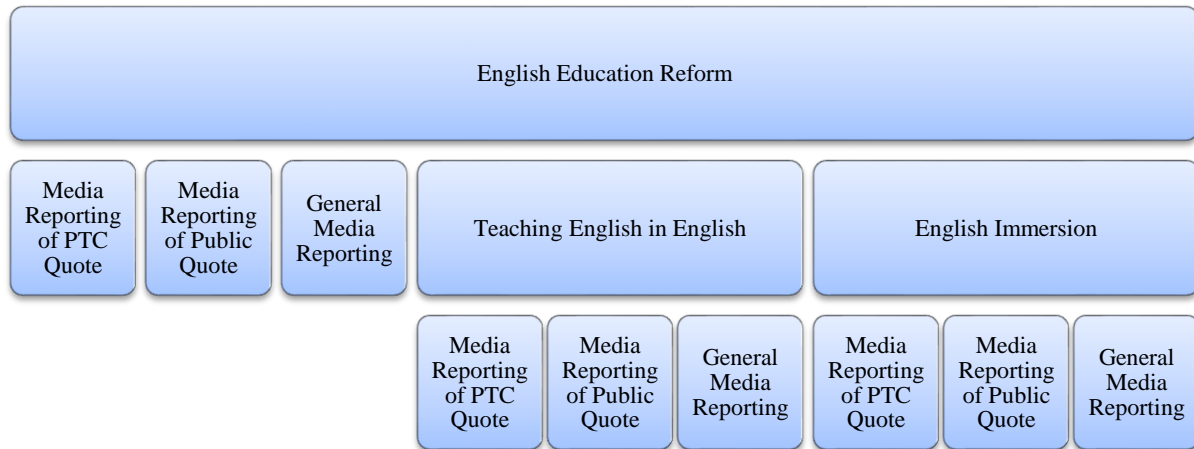
Online news articles were collected using a Korean search term “영어” (yŏng’ŏ), equivalent to “English” in English. A total of 742 newspaper articles from these sources were collected. The scope of content was any article that contained yŏng’ŏ in addition to information about the PTC’s education reform, English education reform, and/or English immersion. A few examples of filtering keywords included Korean equivalents of “English immersion,” “teaching in,” “class in,” “in English,” “regular subject,” and “teaching English in English (TEE).” The articles deemed irrelevant were reviewed to reconfirm that no data regarding English education reform would be omitted by not including these articles. As a result, 500 articles were eliminated, leaving 242 articles for final categorization and coding. The eliminated articles mostly consisted of “English lesson for the day.” The filtering of newspaper articles down to 242 identifies newspaper reporting on the PTC’s public English education reform plan. The further examination of news reporting on teaching English in English and English immersion consists of

²⁸ Yi Kyu-tae, “Chosun 1wi, Joongang 2wi, Dong-a 3wi: Hankook ABChyŏphoe 2012nyŏn parhaeng pusu palp’yopalp’yo 4·5wi nŭn Maeil Business Newspaper·Korea Economic Daily,” *Sisa Press*, December 5, 2013, accessed May 9, 2016, <http://www.sisapress.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=61661>.

²⁹ Ibid.

and the PTC's quotes, the public's quotes, and media reporting of events (general media reporting). The scope is summarized in the following figure.

Figure 1 Scope



The time scope of the qualitative content analysis is from January 22, 2008, to January 31, 2008. This time frame covers major events spanning the proposal phase of the PTC's public English education reform. Starting from the PTC's revealing of its intention to pursue English immersion on January 22, the PTC's retraction of its plans to pursue English immersion on January 28, and the two major public hearings on the PTC's public English education reform on January 25 and 30. This time scope allows ample collection of data on PTC's promotional discourse on its public English education reform as well as discussion and response by the public.

Coding

In order to examine the PTC's English ideology, I conduct a qualitative content analysis on online Korean newspaper articles reporting on the PTC's public English education reform. Qualitative content analysis employs coding, or categorization of data, to tag qualitative data (a

phrase, sentence, paragraph, or entire article). For example, a sentence or phrase written by a Korean language scholar criticizing the PTC's intention to implement English immersion would be tagged with "IdenLan" category under "English Immersion" and "Public Opinion" domain under "Criticism." The benefit of using qualitative content analysis is that it classifies and stratifies data into a multi-level set, constructing a flexible relational database. The database allows cross-level comparison capable of revealing trends and patterns in discourses over time. Qualitative content analysis is effective for this study because it examines a deluge of newspaper articles published over a short period of time on a controversial topic laced with a multitude of perspectives, social contention, and anxiety that produces polarizing opinions. The coding of the source newspaper articles was done on four levels, using the MS Access relational database. The first level captures the metadata of each article. The second level captures the PTC's and the public's discourses, both in quotes and in general media reporting. The third level categorizes the statement into thematic categories.

The focus of this thesis is on the discourses of the PTC and the public, utilizing qualitative content analysis and coding to excavate English ideology. The discourses are coded under the second level. On the other hand, the category of the discourse is coded under the third level. Table 2 and Table 3 below shows the three main types of public English education reform proposals, English ideology, a broad Inclusive Category, and Discourse Category as well as the coding employed and how many quotes and media reports were coded by category. Table 3 is largely the same as PTC discourse with the exception of Public Discourse Type, which codes the opinion of Public Discourse Type including Support, Conditional Support, Neutral, and Criticism. One important note is that Public Discourse Type does not pertain to the public's own

ideology of necessitation or the ideology of externalization, but its response to the PTC's ideology of necessitation and the ideology of externalization.

Table 2 Coding for PTC Discourse

	PTC Discourse					
	Program					
	English Immersion (266) Teach English in English (156) General English Education Reform (191)					
	Ideology of Necessitation (188)				Ideology of Externalization (8)	Program (121)
PTC Discourse Inclusive Category	Class (117)	Global Competition (33)	Anxiety / Confusion (8)	Duty (30)	Identity / Language (8)	Feasibility (121)
PTC Discourse Category	-Class Equality (43) -Private Education (51) -Study Abroad (23)	-Global Competition (33)	-Anxiety / Confusion (8)	-Duty (25) -Necessity (5)	- Korean Language / Identity (8) -English Language and Identity (8)	-Preparedness (23) -Teacher (93)

Table 3 Coding for Public Discourse

	Public Discourse					
	Program					
	English Immersion (304) Teach English in English (167) General English Education Reform (111)					
	Ideology of Necessitation (246)				Ideology of Externalization (33)	Program (224)
Public Discourse Inclusive Category	Class (148)	Global Competition (19)	Anxiety / Confusion (60)	Duty (19)	Korean Language / Identity (33)	Feasibility (224)
Public Discourse Category	-Class Equality (33) -Private Education (96) -Study Abroad (19)	-Global Competition (19)	-Anxiety / Confusion (60)	-Necessity (19)	- Korean Language / Identity (33)	- Feasibility (41) - Preparedness (85) - Classroom (7) - Teacher (67) - Effectiveness (24)
Public Discourse Type	-Support (10) -Conditional Support (18) -Neutral (5) -Criticism (210)				-Support (1) -Conditional Support (2) -Neutral (1) -Criticism (29)	-Support (9) -Conditional Support (61) -Neutral (2) -Criticism (145)

The code for Program represents neither ideologies, but represents the debate between the PTC and the public regarding the feasibility of implementing the program. Additionally, codes such as Actor, the person or entity attributed to a statement, can be linked as this qualitative content analysis employs a relational database. Therefore, each statement is connected to an actor or entity, a media outlet, the date and time of reporting, newspaper article section, etc. although not shown on either Table 2 or Table 3.

This thesis allocates one chapter each for PTC Discourse (Chapter 3) and for Public Discourse (Chapter 4). This thesis will present the result of content analysis both qualitatively and quantitatively. The presentation will be partitioned by the PTC's ideology of necessitation and the public's response to it, the PTC's ideology of externalization, and the public's response to it, and lastly, and the public's response to the program and the PTC's response.

Organization

This thesis looks at the potential reconceptualization of the Korean body, Western Utensils ideology by examining the status of English as a Western utensil through analyzing the PTC's English ideology. It does not attempt to evaluate the PTC's plan as a policy or ascertain whether its public English education plan and English immersion would actually enhance national competitiveness. Instead, this thesis will focus predominantly on the PTC's discourse to divulge its English ideology and perspective on the ideology of externalization. Chapter 2 provides the contextual background on the formulation of Korean as the Korean body and English as a Western utensil and shows that neither Korean body or Western utensil was a static concept by narrating how the Korean state utilized the two languages to promote national competitiveness. Chapter 3 introduces the PTC's public English education reform plan.

Utilizing content analysis, I dissect the PTC's English ideology by examining its promotional rhetoric for the reform plan, showing how the PTC's English ideology strengthens the ideology of necessitation but diverges from the ideology of externalization. Chapter 4 shifts focus to the English ideology of the public through its response to the PTC's public English education reform plan. Also using content analysis, I dissect the PTC's English ideology by examining its response. Lastly, Chapter 5 concludes the thesis.

CHAPTER 2: KOREAN BODY, WESTERN UTENSIL AND ENGLISH IDEOLOGY IN KOREA

Background

This chapter explores how the state's language ideology mapped Korean and English onto the Korean body and Western utensil, respectively, to promote national competitiveness through language policy. Korea was historically a monolingual society and English might have become an important language regardless of the state's intervention. Nevertheless, the linkage of the languages to the Korean body and Western utensils ideology was a product of the state's ideology disseminated through the public education system and mass media. The state utilized both Korean and English to counter perceived domestic and foreign "threats" to the nation. The state presented Korean as a part of the Korean body; an inalienable, shared, and united national identity that needed to be protected by the speakers by building national competitiveness. On the other hand, the state presented English as a necessary instrumental language; a Western utensil that will enhance national competitiveness for the good of the Korean body in the globalizing world. In sum, neither Korean or English were always seen as essential parts of the Korean body, Western utensils.

This chapter offers a background on shaping of English ideology in Korea prior to the PTC's public English education reform plan in 2008. I will first discuss Park Chung-hee regime's promotion of linguistic nationalism in the 1970s and the development of the ideology of externalization. The Park regime sought to galvanize national linguistic identity to buttress its economic modernization efforts. In the process, it pegged Korean as an inherent trait of the Korean body and foreign languages as incongruent to Korean identity. Moving on to the 1990s,

I will discuss *Segyehwa*, the democratically-elected Kim Young-sam administration's economic globalization movement. Kim administration's *Segyehwa* policy developed the ideology of necessitation by pegging English as a necessary and indispensable language. At the same time, it was the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997, locally known as the "IMF Crisis," that solidified and reinforced the ideology of necessitation. Lastly, I will discuss the post-Asian Financial Crisis manifestations of the ideology of necessitation and the ideology of externalization prior to the PTC's introduction of the public English education reform plan.

Korean Language as Korean Body and Ideology of Externalization

The 1970s were a time of rapid economic advancement known as "Modernization of the Fatherland" implemented by the Park Chung-hee regime (1961-1979), which was a state-led drive that transformed the Korean economy to an export-oriented economy emphasizing foreign currency earned by selling mainly labor-intensive, factory-produced goods overseas. This economic model necessitated inexpensive factory labor to keep production costs low for competitiveness in the global market, which in turn necessitated the mobilization of a united and determined but docile labor force willing to work under substandard conditions and wages.

The state's solution for crafting a docile labor force was to create a sense of urgency and unity. The state delineated development of the national economy as a mechanism of national defense linked to "the imperative of survival" as Korea was at a time of political and social upheaval internationally and domestically. Internationally, the Cold War and the perceived threat from North Korea abetted the state's claim of defensive nationalism. The state claimed that Korea's history of prolonged toadyism under the shadow of Chinese influence and the more recent Japanese occupation were forms of national humiliations not to be repeated. It reasoned

that economic power meant national sovereignty in a Darwinian environment where only the fittest survive. Additionally, Korea had largely failed to modernize following the Korean War that ended in 1953, lagging behind industrial North Korea. Overall, the state constructed the Korean body as backward and precarious as a consequence. Domestically, Park came to power through the May 16 coup, which was a military coup d'état justified by Park as a necessary upheaval to protect national sovereignty in a time of political turmoil. This was considered illegitimate by some observers, leading to domestic unrest including street protests. Quelling the unrest and legitimizing the state by enhancing the overall standard of living was a likely motive behind the narrative of Modernization of the Fatherland.

In its illustration of precariousness, the state called on the people to unite and protect the nation, as unity represented ethnic survival, independence, and sovereignty obtained through economic development and competitiveness. This was instrumental for the state in pursuing modernization. It translated down to ordinary citizens as the delineation of an ideal Korean national, a persevering, docile, and patriotic individual with the ability to contribute toward national competitiveness through risk-taking and sacrifice. For example, individuals were encouraged to persevere through long, dangerous, and unsanitary working conditions for the sake of advancing the nation. This also led to a mass physical and ideological mobilization. As the majority of the population dwelled in rural regions, there was a mass exodus to urban regions. The resulting disintegration of agrarian communities, together with a sense of backwardness, was a ripe condition for reinforcing the need for linguistic and cultural homogeneity.³⁰ In sum, the state sought to unite the nation under the banner of defending the nation, national sovereignty, and economic development.

³⁰ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

Park sought to reinforce Korean ethnic identity through the Korean language, claiming that unrestrained spread of foreignness in society such as the use of foreign loanword in public broadcasting was a danger to national identity. The state implemented top-down propagation and inculcation of its language ideology to promote linguistic nationalism.

“The National Language Purification Movement (국어순화운동)” that began in 1976 under the directive of Park was a heavy-handed government approach to promote linguistic nationalism and “discourage” use of foreign words in the public sphere.³¹ This movement pegged foreign languages as incongruent to Korea’s national identity and sought to root out foreign elements in Korean, eliminating competing forms of linguistic identity. The Council for Korean Language Purification Movement (국어 순화 운동 협의회) led the effort to not only remove linguistic remnants of the Japanese occupation, but also other languages including English. In 1977, “the Minister of Education published a list of the Minister of Education published a list of 630 foreign loans to be replaced with pure Korean words, and in November 1978 authorities obliged merchants to remove signs written with ‘foreign letters’ for a period of time,” and the Minister of General Affairs also published “a manual for the purification of administrative vocabulary with a list of 1,035 loanwords from Japanese and English to be replaced/discontinued from use.”³²

The National Language Purification Movement also had an assertive hand in the cultural sphere. According to Sin Hyŏn-chun, musicians were “encouraged” to create or replace their foreign-oriented monikers with purely Korean ones. Formerly “ŏniŏnsŭ (Onions)” became

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ross King, “North and South Korea,” In *Language & National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 216 quoted in Seung-ja Shim-Fabre, ““La Creation D’uneD’une Langue Standard Et Son Evolution Dans Le Nord Et Dans Le Sud De La Coree,”,” *Cahiers d’etudesd’etudes coreennes*, no. 4, 75.

“yangp’atül (양파들),” “pŭllu pelsŭ (Blue Bells)” became “ch’ŏngchong (청종),” and “p’ipösŭ (Fevers)” became “yŏlkitül (열기들),” one after another.³³

Additionally, the public school system was a major ground for language purification and the state propagation of linguistic nationalism. Starting in 1973, public schools nationwide established a “language purification class (언어 순화반)” and had a designated staff for “Korean language counseling center (국어 상담실).”³⁴ Use of foreign language and foreign loanwords were discouraged in schools. Public schools were also inundated with slogans and movements such as “upholding our language in writing (우리말 지켜 쓰기).” Furthermore, school organizations such as “Upholding Our Language Committee (우리말 지켜 쓰기회)” and the “Korean language movement student council (국어운동 학생회)” partook in unearthing pure Korean words for foreign loanwords and promoting the use of the “beautiful speech.” This essentially led to students leading the propagation of linguistic nationalism and language purification in the public sphere. Student-led efforts in the public including “naming children beautifully movement (고운 이름 짓기 운동)” and “correct signboard movement (간판 바로 잡기 운동)”³⁵ encouraged the use of Korean over equivalent foreign loanwords, claiming that speaking and displaying foreign languages were incongruent to Korea’s national identity.

In reinforcing linguistic identity and the Korean body, foreign languages were not the only target. The state also sought to standardize the language by suppressing regional dialects and elevating one local language (the Seoul dialect) as the national language. For example, Park

³³ Sin Hyŏn-chun, “taejungŭmak ŭi minjokchuŭi,” P’aju: Ch’angbiP’aju: Ch’angbi, accessed April 12, 2012, <http://www.changbi.com/archives/37724?cat=2638>.

³⁴ “Han’gŭl paljŏn undongsa,” *Digital Hangeul Museum*, accessed April 12, 2017, <http://www.hangeulmuseum.org/sub/education/hanDay/develop01.jsp>.

³⁵ Ibid.

Chung-hee's public broadcasting policy eliminated local dialects in public media. It imposed "Korean broadcasters like KBS and EBS maintain programs aimed at lexical purification and inculcation/propagation of 'correct' Korean," claiming that it would enhance literacy and enable social mobility and participation in society for all.³⁶ In the perspective of the state, eliminating regional dialects would not only create a sense of oneness through linguistic homogeneity but also to engender a sense of equality by reducing the class gap between the rural and urban.

The National Language Purification Movement led by the Park regime was a process of systematic language policy based on its language beliefs, linking the language to the "Korean body" as a natural and inherent trait of the nation while excluding foreign languages. Explicit manifestations of pride for the language became outwardly as the state promoted linguistic nationalism through the language purification movement; utilizing the Korean language to stimulate nationalistic language attitudes and ostracize foreign languages and their infiltration into Korean.

While the lineage- and blood-based identity played an integral role as the mobilizing ideology and the driver for the state's goal of building national competitiveness, language-based identity went hand-in-hand with ethnic nationalism in creating a sense of homogeneous nation linguistically and ethnically. The amalgam of homogeneous linguistic and ethnic identity concocted a national consciousness unified by one blood and one language. In turn, this sense of homogeneous nation served as the fuel for the state's building of national competitiveness.

Undergirded by national homogeneity formed by ethno-linguistic unity, Modernization of the Fatherland led to a rapid and compressed economic growth now known as the "Miracle on the Han River," elevating Korea's economy and the standard of living. Nevertheless, fervent

³⁶ Ross King, "North and South Korea," In *Language & National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 216.

linguistic nationalism started to wane at the turn of the decade into the 1990s as Korea began to face new waves of change domestically and internationally. Domestically, the inauguration of democracy after decades of dictatorial rule led to a self-examination of past totalitarian policies including the National Language Purification Movement. Internationally, Korea's increasing economic interconnectedness with the rest of the world in the late-1980s and the early-1990s led to a rethinking on the role of foreign language for Korea. Hence, "'purification' has also been negatively identified with fascist proclivities"³⁷ as it was associated with Park's dictatorial regime and foreign language became increasingly important as Korea faced a different global climate in globalization. As the state sought to integrate the nation in the globalizing world, it was fully aware that export-oriented economic model dependent on manufacturing adopted during Modernization of the Fatherland would have been unsustainable and uncompetitive as wages rose relative to other developing countries such as China. Hence, the English as a lingua franca of the world became increasingly valued.

English as Western Utensil and Ideology of Necessitation

Segyehwa: Development of Ideology of Necessitation

Keen to sustain Korea's economic development, the state regarded transitioning the economic system to a service-oriented industry inevitable. The state subsequently launched *Segyehwa*, a nationalistic globalization movement in the early- and mid-1990s designed to incorporate Korea into the global order. According to the state, continual enhancement of

³⁷ Ross King, "North and South Korea," In *Language & National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 216, 217.

national competitiveness empowered by economic development was vital for securing national survival.

For a transition to a service-oriented industry, an educated workforce was necessary. The newly-elected Kim Young-sam government, considered the first fully democratically elected administration in Korea, regarded English as an important skill and a vital communication line that would facilitate economic network with the rest of the world. While English had been important in the past, Kim administration believed Korea's successful *Segyehwa* and integration to the global economic system demanded more English skills in the workforce. Hence, the state's English ideology was that English was a necessary language to ensure Korea's continued growth and economic survival as Korea adjusted to a new type of modernization in globalization. English became a new linguistic tool of the new era. Hence, the state engineered another linguistic project; *Segyehwa* was accompanied by the state's first large-scale, top-down emphasis on broadening English education in public schools.

In November 1993, Kim Young-sam announced *Segyehwa*. He reasoned that Korea's entrance to the global world order was inevitable in the era of global interconnectedness and building competitive edge was a question of national survival. He urged the nation to have pride in its country, and triumph in limitless competition on the global stage to raise the national status.³⁸ He also emphasized the "first-tier-ization" of all industries, improving the overall quality of Korea across the board.³⁹ He pushed for liberalization of the economy and "small

³⁸ Kim Ch'ung-il, "uri ŭi kukchewisang pyŏnhwa kŭngji katko segye sok ŭro," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 25, 1993, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://newslibrary.naver.com/viewer/index.nhn?articleId=1993112500329104004&editNo=15&printCount=1&publi shDate=1993-11-25&officeId=00032&pageNo=4&printNo=14927&publishType=00010>.

³⁹ Kukchŏngsinmun, "[kimyŏngsam(金泳三)chŏngbu ch'ulbŏmch'ulbŏm 3tol] huban'gihuban'gi(後半期) mamuri charhaeya kaehyŏk(改革) wansŏng," *Kukchŏngsinmun*, February 26, 1996, accessed May 2, 2016, <http://www.korea.kr/archive/governmentView.do?newsId=148746038>.

government” to eliminate trade barriers, emphasizing that “nation like ours that lacks natural resources can only grow by expanding trade with countries in the world.”⁴⁰ He had just signed the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which opened up the domestic agricultural market at an unprecedented level.⁴¹

Concurrently, President Kim believed appropriately trained labor force was imperative in order to pursue the state’s developmental policies in the era of globalization. In other words, Korean citizens needed to become educated “global citizens.” In January 1995, President Kim declared that globalization of education carries the “utmost importance”⁴² in the nation’s effort to compete against and join the ranks of developed countries. He acted on his rhetoric by becoming the first president since 1974 to attend a Seoul National University graduation ceremony, giving a speech titled “Dream and Ambition.” In the speech, he declared “the world of unlimited competition” is upon Korea, and stated that “national competitiveness cannot exist without university competitiveness.”⁴³ He also attended the Ewha Womans’ University graduation ceremony in 1995, becoming the first sitting president to attend a graduation ceremony of a private and a women’s university. He again emphasized “the era of globalization,” urging the graduates to “ceaselessly study and always strive to confidently compete in all fields.”⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Kim Ch'ung-il, “uri ūi kukchewisang pyōnhwa kūngji katko segye sok ūro,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 25, 1993, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://newslibrary.naver.com/viewer/index.nhn?articleId=1993112500329104004&editNo=15&printCount=1&publishDate=1993-11-25&officeId=00032&pageNo=4&printNo=14927&publishType=00010>.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Yonhap News, “金 taet’ongnyōngtaet’ongnyōng sōul 大 chorōpsik ch’amsōkch’amsōk,” Yonhap News, February 26, 1994, accessed May 1, 2016, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=shm&sid1=100&oid=001&aid=0003787913>.

⁴⁴ National Archives of Korea, yōktae taet’ongnyōngtaet’ongnyōng kwa hamkke han t’ūkpyōrt’ūkpyōr han chorōpsik, *Ministry of the Interior and Safety*, http://www.mogaha.go.kr/cmm/fms/FileDown.do?atchFileId=FILE_000000000045649&fileSn=1.

Segyehwa elevated the importance of education. Coupled with Korea's traditional zeal for education,⁴⁵ which is often considered to be one of the foundations of Korea's economic modernization in the 1970s and 1980s, the demand for education soared. In 1990, 33.2% of the total high school graduates went on to attend college, which was certainly not low even compared to developed countries at the time. However, the figure almost doubled to 60.1% in 1997, and almost doubled again to 81.3% in 2004.⁴⁶

As President Kim emphasized the global citizenship discourse and education, English education took center-stage. A public English education reform was underway. The Sixth National Curricula shifted the focus on teaching communicative English rather than on grammar in middle and high schools in 1995 and 1996, respectively. Another reform, the Seventh National Curricula in 1997 instituted compulsory English education in public schools beginning in third grade. These changes reflected a shift in attitude toward English. The reforms not only elevated English as a requirement of the future but starting from a young age. They were the state's way of urging people to become globally competitive individuals. By doing so, it stirred up the traditional zeal for education and spawned *chogiyuhak*, a Korean term for studying abroad at a young age. It unofficially promulgated English as the most important yet basic requirement for individuals to contribute to national development. While the state's discourse on linguistic nationalism was replaced by the emphasis on the English-speaking global individual, ethnic nationalism remained as part of the Korean national identity as the state continued to espouse it as the ideological driver. As Nanette Gottlieb claims in case of Japan, English education was

⁴⁵ Michael Seth, "Education Zeal, State Control and Citizenship in South Korea," *Citizenship Studies* 16, No. 1 (2012).

⁴⁶ Yi Sang-hyok, "changnyŏn taehak chinhangnyul 81.9%... 20nyŏn mane ch'ŏtch'ŏt harak," *Segye Ilbo*, March 8, 2010, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://www.segye.com/content/html/2010/03/07/20100307002203.html>,

“simply not a matter of foreign-language education”⁴⁷ or as in the case of Singapore, “English was necessary for the access it provided to advances in science and technology critically important for the development of Singapore’s economy.”⁴⁸ In Korea, like both Japan and Singapore, the purpose of learning English was not so much about actually learning a language, but about learning a skill to contribute toward nation-building. Therefore, English was still considered a Western utensil, an inherently foreign tool solely for enhancing national competitiveness. Furthermore, the state’s urging of people to become globally competitive individuals was a continuation of “developmental citizenship that marked the past authoritarian military regimes has carried on since the transition to civilian-led democracy.”⁴⁹ In sum, the state’s English ideology and its language policies pegged English as a necessary tool for the nation. At the same time, the state reinforced identity based on ethnic nationalism during *Segyehwa*, hence continuing the lineage of the Korean body, Western utensils ideology.

Segyehwa was a gradual assimilation into the world system, a systematic integration planned out by the state. Linguistically, it initiated the formulation of the ideology of necessitation by elevating English as a significant Western utensil. However, an unexpected social and economic crisis like never before pushed the nation into chaos and played an integral role in filling the nation with anxiety and uncertainty. The Asian Financial Crisis not only solidified English as “a nice skill to have, “but the most fundamental skill which consequently developed Korea’s unique English ideology by solidifying the English language as not only as “a nice skill to have,” but the most fundamental skill.

⁴⁷ Nanette Gottlieb, “Japan,” In *Language & National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 197.

⁴⁸ Andrew Simpson, “Singapore,” In *Language & National Identity in Asia*, edited by Andrew Simpson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 378.

⁴⁹ Hans Schattle, “Global Citizenship as a National Project: The Evolution of Segye Shimin in South Korean Public Discourse,” *Citizenship Studies* 19, no. 1 (2015).

Asian Financial Crisis and Intensification of English Ideology

The Asian Financial Crisis broke out in November 1997 as Korea experienced a severe shortage of foreign exchange. At the height of the crisis in 1998, about 1.8 million people lost their jobs. A single USD appreciated to about KRW 2,000 at its height, which was more than double the pre-crisis rate. The market interest rate skyrocketed to 30% and about 22,800 companies declared bankruptcy. Korea's USD 10,000 gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, a level that symbolized the country's status as a developed country, crashed down to USD 6,742.⁵⁰ The government requested emergency loans from the IMF, and it had no choice but to accept the IMF's neoliberal economic reform demands in exchange for the bailout fund. It is imperative to note the reaction of the state, or more precisely, the lack of reaction by the state in addition to the timing of the Asian Financial Crisis. The state was completely caught off-guard by the crisis. While the USD appreciated to a new record high against the KRW day after day, no one knew exactly what was going on, or how to handle it. The incompetence of the state as the crisis surfaced thoroughly injected a sense of anxiety among the people. The timing of the crisis ensured maximum shrapnel. Up to this point, Korea's miraculous economic development had achieved a level of development that took Western nations centuries to achieve. Korea earned the moniker of one of the Four Asian Tigers. Korea was at the doorstep of becoming a first-tier country. Hope and optimism were at their zenith. The crisis emerged after decades of unimpeded economic growth. Between 1961 and 1998, Korea's GDP growth rate fell below 0% only once in 1980⁵¹ due to the 1979 global oil shock. Behind its prowess of modernized

⁵⁰ Korean Educational Development Institute, *IMF kyŏngjewigi wa kyoyuk: kyŏngjewigi ŭi kyohun kwa kyoyuk chŏk sisa* by Kim Yŏng-ch'ŏlch'ŏl, Korean Educational Development Institute, Sŏul, 2000.

⁵¹ Google, "GDP Growth Rate," *Google*, March 26, 2016, accessed May 3, 2016, https://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=d5bncppjof8f9_&met_y=ny_gdp_mkt_p_kd_zg&idim=country:KOR&R:JPN:VNM&hl=en&dl=en#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nselm=h&met_y=ny_gdp_mkt_p_kd_zg&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=region&idim=country:KOR&ifdim=region&hl=en_US&dl=en&ind=false.

economy, Korea began to put itself on the world map by increasingly interconnecting with the international community; Korea hosted the 1988 Olympics, joined the United Nations in 1991, the World Trade Union in 1995, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1996. The landmark breaking of the USD 10,000 in GDP was celebrated and touted as Korea rubbing shoulders with the developed nations. The middle class grew tremendously and people believed that they could become members of the middle class as long as they worked hard.

The Asian Financial Crisis “was not simply an economic crisis, but a societal crisis.”⁵² The Asian Financial Crisis changed the attitude of Koreans, changing their daily lives as well as their outlook on the future. The 1.8 million newly unemployed and their families lost more than their jobs. They lost their optimism for the future and the confidence they had in their state and nation. One survey indicated that the level of optimism about the future decreased from 62.3% before the Asian Financial Crisis to 31.2% by July 1999.⁵³

Structurally, the Asian Financial Crisis introduced neoliberalism, free-market principles including deregulation, competition, and employment flexibility.⁵⁴ Neoliberal principles subsequently led to a sweeping reform in Korea’s human resource management. Mainly, neoliberalism required workers to be disposable. At the same time, they had to be cheap. On the other hand, it valued exceptional talents, engendering intense competition to the top and widening the income gap. Additionally, regular employment decreased and temporary work

⁵² Ministry of Strategy and Finance, Sungkyunkwan University Hybrid-Culture Institution, *2040nyŏn han’gug ŭi salm ŭi chil: hamkke ilgu nŭn ch’angjo chŏk mirae rŭl hyanghayŏ*, by Yi Chong-kwan, Kim Hŭng-chong, Yang Hyŏn-mi, Cho Hwang-hŭi, Ch’oe Hang-sŏp, Ministry of Strategy and Finance, Sŏul, 2010.

⁵³ Pak Hyŏng-chun, “konggam ŭi chŏngch’isahoehakchŏngch’isahoehak kwa han’gukhan’guk sahoe,” *Inhan’gugin ũn nugu in’gain’ga: 38kaji k’odŭk’odŭ ro ingnŭn uri ŭi chŏngch’esŏngchŏngch’esŏng* edited by Na Ŭn-yŏng, P’ajuP’aju: 21segibuksŭ, 2013.

⁵⁴ Nelly Stromquist, “The Twinning of Ideas and Material Conditions: Globalization, Neoliberalism, and Postmodernism,” In *Education in a Globalized World : The Connectivity of Economic Power, Technology, and Knowledge*, edited by Nelly Stromquist (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002)

increased in the post-Asian Financial Crisis job market. Capital, with state and the ideology of globalization and neoliberalism on its back, has thoroughly controlled the table on labor in Korea, demanding highly trained individuals. To become a highly trained individual, investment in education beginning from the early age was the key. But neoliberalism transferred “the responsibility of social reproduction onto individual families.”⁵⁵

In this climate, the Asian Financial Crisis had a particularly poignant influence on the way people viewed education. Knowing that education is often credited as the foundation of Korea’s remarkable economic growth, and many individuals responded to the crisis with education as an outlet. A survey done by the Korea Consumer Agency compared various attitudes before and after the Asian Financial Crisis. One showed that 90% of households stated that they reduced living expense after the Asian Financial Crisis. However, out of the 90%, only 1.2% stated that they reduced children’s education expense, illustrating that people were not willing to forego education despite people increasingly considered education expense “burdensome” after the Asian Financial Crisis.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, education expenses remained relatively high at 23.4% of the household budget in 1999. Furthermore, 10.8% of the households reported that they financed a loan or sold property to pay for education.⁵⁷ People were simply not willing to forgo education in the present because education was the future, as people responded to the crisis by trying to gain a competitive edge through education. It created an environment of perpetual learning and self-

⁵⁵ Cho Hae-joang, “The Spec Generation Who Can’t Say ‘No’: Overeducated and Underemployed Youth in Contemporary South Korea,” *positions: asia critique* 23, no. 3 (2015), 456.

⁵⁶ Korea Consumer Agency, *IMF ch’ejech’eje chŏnhu ŭi sobiŭisik mit haengt’aehaengt’ae pigyojosa kyŏlgwa*, by Hŏ Chŏng-t’aekt’aek, Kim Hyŏn-chu, Korea Consumer Agency, Ŭmsŏng, 1999, accessed January 29, 2018, http://www.kca.go.kr/brd/m_46/view.do?seq=1126&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&multi_itm_seq=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&pitem=10&page=143.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

development, or “cradle to the grave” education. The expanding consumer base of education consisted of both professionals and students alike. Statistically, individuals who considered “education as the most significant social matter” climbed sharply from 11% in 1998 (the initial stage of the Asian Financial Crisis) to 29% in 1999, and peaked at 43% in 2007.⁵⁸ Furthermore, the participation rate in lifetime education rate increased from 17% in 1997 to 22% in 2006.⁵⁹ Family vacation plans even turned into educational endeavors. Prior to the Asian Financial Crisis, families tended to seek pure relaxation from their vacations. However, families in the Post-Asian Financial Crisis era began to vacation with a goal, seeking educational value in vacation by going on a working holiday or visiting historical and cultural sites for their children.⁶⁰

The Asian Financial Crisis was an economic crisis on the façade and a social crisis inside, bringing a total social upheaval that drastically changed the attitude, daily lives, and outlook on the future. The Asian Financial Crisis suddenly and ruthlessly crushed the nascent confidence and replaced hope with fear, filled the atmosphere with insecurity.

English Ideology, Globalization, and Neoliberalism

How did the ideology of necessitation progress in the aftermath of *Segyehwa* and the Asian Financial Crisis? The state and local governments promoted English as a way of building national competitiveness. National and regional governments established economic zones in Jeju in 2001 and in Incheon, Busan, and Gwangyang in 2002. Other than providing business

⁵⁸ Hong Chi-yŏng, “IMF ihu 10nyŏn, Future Management sobit’ürendūsobit’ürendü,” *Advertising Information Center*, November 18, 2009, accessed January 28, 2018, <http://www.ad.co.kr/journal/column/show.do?ukey=76499>.

⁵⁹ Kwŏn Yŏng-il, “oehwanwigigŭkpok 10nyŏn,” *Korea.kr*, November 5, 2007, accessed February 3, 2018, <http://www.korea.kr/gonggam/newsView.do?newsId=148682448>.

⁶⁰ Kang Sin-kyŏm, Pak Yong-kyu, *IMFsidae chŏbiyong yŏgasisŏr ūi kaebalbangan*, Samsung Economic Research Institute: Sŏul, 1998.

incentives, special zones created an English-friendly environment, such as allowing official documents to be in English, for foreign businesses to invest and work with Korean companies. On the other hand, Seoul Mayor Lee Myung-bak announced in 2003 that the city government will promote “English as a Common Language,” which would lead to the preparation of official city documents and administration of director-level meetings in both Korean and English.⁶¹ At the time, Mayor Lee stated that “As Seoul becomes a hub in Northeast Asia, citizens must be able to speak English.”⁶²

State policies promoting the use of English also had local consequences as they “were often discussed using the term *yŏngŏ inp ’ŭra* ‘English infra(structure),’ implying that the English language is equivalent to a material base (such as transportation systems or financial networks) which can synergistically facilitate economic development”⁶³ One such infrastructure was English village. It was a concept of building a town that duplicated a scene of a Western town in Korea—from architecture to people and most importantly, language—to create an English immersion education experience by duplicating a living and studying abroad experience. For example, an elementary school student may experience an English village by doing everyday things like buying school supplies or attending an English class. English villages were mostly funded by local and regional governments and were “often advertised as a populist alternative to costly *chogiyuhak* that allows everyone access to an ‘effective’ English language learning

⁶¹ Ch’oe Chae-yŏng, “insuwi ‘yŏngŏ orin’ wae...’yŏngŏ sillyŏk i kot kukkagyŏngjaengnyŏk,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 31, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=200801310312285&code=910100.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Joseph Sung-Yul Park, *The Local Construction of a Global Language, Ideologies of English in South Korea* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2009), 39.

experience.”⁶⁴ The first English village was established in Ansan, Gyeonggi Province in 2004. In 2006, eight English villages were built in Korea and 10 new ones being proposed.⁶⁵

Additionally, universities, private schools, and even some public schools had already started teaching non-English subjects in English. As Korean universities increasingly strive to build competitiveness in the globalizing world, many universities have competitively and rapidly increased the number of classes taught in English in recent years under the belief that they are not competing against other domestic universities, but universities throughout the world.⁶⁶ For example, technical schools including the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, the Gwangju Institute of Science and Technology, and Ulsan National Institute of Science and Technology hold all non-elective courses in English.⁶⁷ Additionally, Yonsei University, Korea University, and Ewha Womans University hold 30 to 40 percent of their classes in English.⁶⁸ However, the lack of quality has been an issue⁶⁹ as either professors and lecturers were not proficient enough to teach in English or students often lacked English proficiency to understand class materials.

⁶⁴ Ibid. 47.

⁶⁵ Ibid. 47 quoted in Kim Tong-hun, Hwang Chun-pöm, “nōdonado ‘yōngōmaül’ ...ap’tat’wōsōap’tat’wōsō ‘kukchehaengsa,’” *Hankyoreh*, May 19, 2006.

⁶⁶ Ku Yong-hŭi, “chōnnamdae chibbyōngmun ch’ongjangch’ongjang ‘seggyewa ūi kyōngjaeng sōnŏn,’” *Newsis*, December 24, 2015, accessed January 23, 2018,

http://www.newsis.com/ar_detail/view.html?ar_id=NISX20151224_0010497402&cID=10809&pID=10800, Kim Pyōng-muk, “i sidae ūi taehakch’ongjangtaehakch’ongjang, kŭ nŭn nuguyōya hanŭn’gahanŭn’ga,” *Korean Council for University Education*, September 10, 2006, accessed May 8, 2016,

<http://magazine.kcue.or.kr/last/popup.php?vol=143&no=3456>, Kwōn O-sōng, “miguk sik kyōngjaenggyoyug ūi chugŭm...sōnamp’yo ch’ongjang sat’oesōnamp’yo ch’ongjang sat’oe yogu kōse,” *Hankyoreh*, April 8, 2011, accessed January 23, 2018, http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/472067.html, Ewha Woman’s University, “Insamal,” *Ewha Woman’s University*, accessed May 8, 2016,

http://www.ewha.ac.kr/mbs/ewhokr/subview.jsp?id=ewhokr_010101000000, Ch’oe Ch’ang, “Sōng Ch’ang-mo Inje University ch’ongjang “seggye tacha kkwa kyōngjaeng hanŭn taehak mandŭlt’ōmandŭlt’ō,” *University News Network*, June 12, 2004, accessed January 23, 2018, <https://news.unn.net/news/articleView.html?idxno=7491>.

⁶⁷ Chang Sŭl-ki, “10nyōnt chae haedap ōmnŭn ‘yōngō kangŭi’ nollan,” *Chosun Ilbo*, April 18, 2011, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://weekly.chosun.com/client/news/viw.asp?ctcd=C04&nNewsNumb=002152100011>.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ *Hankyoreh*, “yōngō moripkyoyuk, hakkyogyoyuk mangch’indamangch’inda,” *Hankyoreh*, January 27, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/opinion/editorial/265950.html>.

In Seoul, three private elementary schools have been teaching non-English subjects in English. The principal of Maewŏn elementary school boasted that its English immersion program had earned high praise from parents with its tailored program and subsequent increase in the number of applications.⁷⁰ Additionally, competitive private high schools including Kukje, Korean Minjok Leadership Academy, and Myeongji all had been teaching non-English subjects in English.⁷¹ Lastly, seven elementary schools in Koyang City, Kyŏngki Province had implemented English immersion in twelve classes including all first through sixth grades in mathematics, science, arts, sociology, music, etc. in seven different elementary schools. According to the city's Board of Education office, it "confirmed the possibility of English immersion education in public schools."⁷²

How has English ideology established by globalization and the Korean state played out? High-achieving Korean students are envied by politicians abroad including in the US.⁷³ These are commendable achievements for a nation that was one of the poorest in the world a half-century ago. However, education in Korea, especially English education, has become a source of anxiety and frustration channeled through astronomical spending on private English education and boasting one of the highest numbers of students studying abroad.

⁷⁰ Segye Ilbo, "yŏngŏ morip kyoyuk... öttök'eöttök'e posimnikka," *Segye Ilbo*. January 29, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.segye.com/newsView/20080128001716>.

⁷¹ Yi Kyŏng-hŭi, "'sagyoyukpi nŭlgo kugögyoyuk chŏha" panbal," *Segye Ilbo*, January 24, 2008, accessed May 9, 2016, <http://www.segye.com/content/html/08/01/23/080123002572.html>.

⁷² Chosun Ilbo, "insuwi to 'yŏngŏgoedam'?...yŏngŏhoeüi hanŭn chul algo ppajyŏnna" ppyŏinnŭn nongdame p'oksop'okso," *Chosun Ilbo*, January 30, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2008/01/30/2008013000602.html.

⁷³ Valerie Strauss, "Arne Duncan: Why can't we be more like South Korea?" *Washington Post*, January 18, 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/01/18/arne-duncan-why-cant-we-be-more-like-south-korea/>.

A major private English school chain NOVA in Japan declared bankruptcy in 2007, which was followed by another major chain GEOS in 2010.⁷⁴ In comparison, major private English schools in Korea are recording millions in profits where “star” instructors are treated like movie stars. As of 2012, there were 750 private study abroad institutes in Seoul alone, and almost 1,300 nationwide.⁷⁵ In 2014, the Wall Street Journal reported that Korea spent \$18 billion on private education, and “a report last year by management consulting firm McKinsey & Company called Korea’s education system an ‘arms race.’”⁷⁶

Fittingly with globalization, a “global perspective” and competency in communicating with foreigners became the sought-after qualification. In turn, a survey conducted by Statistics Korea asked school parents why they would like to send their children abroad, and the most common response at 46.9% was that “in order to nourish international perspective,”⁷⁷ seemingly reflecting the demands of the capital. Having a “global perspective” meant English proficiency and consequently, English became a fundamental knowledge or a common sense,⁷⁸ a measuring stick that gauges individuals’ global perspective and competency in the globalized world. English became an essential skill regardless of age, position, seniority, and job description. The testing of this competency was largely done on paper, through test scores on international English tests such as the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) and the

⁷⁴ Minoru Matsutani, “Geos school chain files for bankruptcy,” The Japan Times, April 22, 2010, accessed May 8, 2016, <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2010/04/22/national/geos-school-chain-files-for-bankruptcy/#.VybsyPkrJ1s>.

⁷⁵ Fair Trade Commission, Sungshin Women’s University Industry-Academic Cooperation Foundation Team, *sagyoyuksijang esŏ yakkwan iyongsilt’aebunsŏkiyongsilt’aebunsŏk mit sobijabohobangan surip ūl wihan yŏn’guyŏn’gu* by Kim Kyŏng-hŭi, Kwak Ch’ang-sin, Hwang T’ae-hŭi, Kim Tae-uk, Fair Trade Commission, Sŏul, 2012.

⁷⁶ Jeyup Kwaak, “South Korea’s \$18 Billion Education Problem,” *The Wall Street Journal*, August 28, 2014, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://blogs.wsj.com/korearealtime/2014/08/28/south-koreas-18-billion-education-problem/>.

⁷⁷ Statistics Korea, *han’gukhan’guk ūi sahoedonghyang*, Statistics Korea, Taejŏn, 2012.

⁷⁸ (Abelmann et al. 2009)

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Even these tests took a domestic meaning in Korea under intense competition in education and employment. Although the intended purpose for these tests is for gauging English language readiness for individuals seeking to study abroad, 80% of the examinee were elementary, middle, and high school students taking the tests for admission to a special-purpose high school and benefit toward college entrance.⁷⁹ Therefore, there was no practical need to actually speak English while there were a plenty of incentives to learn how to take a test in English. Instead, English was a gauge of competence mainly judged through test scores, which led to jobs and class mobility.

The need for English education was not limited to job seekers. For those already employed, companies also began mandating English testing for all employees.⁸⁰ With increasing competition, the state and employers required a new qualification other than a college degree that can distinguish uniquely talented individuals from a relatively homogeneous working population. Those already employed and job seekers alike flocked to private English education schools and went on to study abroad. The state's emphasis on English education expressed through its public English education reforms and education in general led individuals with diverse backgrounds to flock to private English education and study abroad in a colossal scale.

Additionally, the desire for English education and gaining “global perspective” was not limited to wealthy households. In 2012, 62.4% of parents surveyed stated that they want to send their child to study abroad. Additionally, 51.9% of the parents with a relatively low income—between KRW 1,000,000 and KRW 2,000,000 (USD 877.95 and \$1755.90)—stated that they

⁷⁹ Mun Söng-ung, “yöngögyoyuk, ol köt i watta,” *Munhwa Ilbo*, January 29, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://www.munhwa.com/news/news_print.html?no=2008012901033027161002.

⁸⁰ Sanöpt'im, “<taegiöpt to 'yöngö sidae'..chikchangin ün koeropta>,” *Yonhap News*, February 3, 2008, accessed May 8, 2016, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=shm&sid1=102&oid=001&aid=0001948213>.

desired to send their child abroad to study.⁸¹ In reasoning their desire to send their child abroad, 46.9% of the parents stated that they wanted to “nourish their child’s international perspective,” 20.9% stated that they wanted to provide an educational environment suitable for the child’s needs, and interestingly, only 1.2% cited high private education cost in Korea.⁸² These statistics demonstrate that the pursuit of English education abroad is desired regardless of class, income, and cost.

Koreans students studying abroad ranked third in the world in 2012 at 123,700, just behind Chinese students at 694,400 and Indian students at 189,500.⁸³ Taking the number of students into account, this meant that Korean students were about four times more likely to go study abroad than Chinese students. The study abroad booms also engendered various social lexicons alluding to Korea’s education craze. Studying abroad at an early age known as *chogiyuhak* boomed. According to the Ministry of Education, the number of elementary school students increased from 4,052 in 2003 to 6,451 in 2006,⁸⁴ which is more than a 50% increase in three years. Another source reported that the number of “young students” studying abroad increased from 3,274 students (0.04% of all students) in 1997 to 16,446 students (0.21% of all students) in 2004.⁸⁵ On the other hand, *kirogi* family, or goose family is a transnational splitting of the family for children’s education, which appeared in the late 1990s following *Segyehwa*. In most cases, the mother would take the children to an English-speaking country with an objective

⁸¹ Statistics Korea, *han’gukhan’guk ūi sahoedonghyang*, Statistics Korea, Taejŏn, 2012.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Niall McCarthy, “These Countries Have The Most Students Studying Abroad [Infographic],” *Forbes*, July 2, 2015, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2015/07/02/these-countries-have-the-most-students-studying-abroad-infographic/#7283e2df5d01>.

⁸⁴ Chŏng Sŏng-chin, “malleisia, ‘yŏngŏ ro suŏp’ tan’gietan’gie sŏnggong,” *Chosun Ilbo*, January 26, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2008/01/26/2008012600053.html.

⁸⁵ Yi Su-pŏm, “han kyosil e 40myŏng i yŏngŏ ro suŏp?...” *kyŏlguk hagwŏn ūro nae mollil kŏt*,” *Hankyoreh*, January 28, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/266001.html>.

of providing English and global education for children, while the father would remain behind for work and support the family financially. Although there are no official statistics on the number of *kirogi* family, estimates indicated that there are about 500,000 *kirogi* households as of 2010,⁸⁶ which may indicate that two million individuals are members of *kirogi* family, assuming a family of four. This is about 4% of the population. Becoming a *kirogi* family to advance their welfare can be a risky endeavor because sending a child abroad does not always lead to success stories, despite taking a tremendous financial and psychological investment arising from family separation, running two households, traveling back and forth, and coping with loneliness. Additionally, the child may not adjust to the foreign culture and learn English and may have trouble adjusting back to Korea after return.

Persistence of Ideology of Externalization

Soon after the Asian Financial Crisis began, the nation became embroiled in English as an official language debate ignited by novelist Pok Kō-il, a strong proponent of neoliberalism. Through his book *Kukcheō Shidaeūi Minjogō* (National Language in the Era of International Language), he argued that Korea's narrow-minded, state-sponsored nationalism is limiting the potential of Korea in the increasingly globalizing and competitive world. In this backdrop, he argued that emotional adherence to Korean is holding back the nation, as English has become the global language. He suggested Korea should eventually adopt English over Korean by implementing English as an official language as the stopgap.

⁸⁶ Hō Nam-sōl, "maenyōn 2man'gagu2man'gagu nūrō 'kirōgi kagu' 50man nōmō... "kōn'gangkōn'gang-uul akhwa kwallich'aek p'iryo," "kwallich'aek p'iryo," *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, November 10, 2013, accessed April 19, 2016, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=201311102243195&code=940202.

The novelist and his idea immediately received a huge backlash, forming a fierce debate involving academics, media, and the public mainly divided into two camps including the proponents of implementing English as an official language and supporters for the Korean language and identity. While it is difficult to gauge the proportion of support and opposition, the idea of implementing English as an official language did receive majority support according to some surveys.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the support for the national language was significant. Furthermore, the state was not involved in the debate, at least officially and there was no tangible step toward actual realization toward implementing English as an official language or significant discussion on pedagogical or logistical solution toward it. The Korean language's stake in national identity firmly remained.

While the number of students studying English and the amount of money spent toward English learning skyrocketed along with globalization, one case that shows the Korean's role in national identity was Save the Korean Word Processor Movement (*Araeahan'gŭlssalligi*: 아래아한글살리기운동). *Araeahan'gŭl* was a computer word processing software, equivalent to Microsoft Word, developed by Hancom, Inc. a Korean IT company. In the 1980s and 1990s, *Araeahan'gŭl* was more than a computer software owned by Hancom. It was a national economic asset that harbored the pride of the nation against Microsoft that dominated the world software market and there was a tendency to equate *Araeahan'gŭl* to han'gŭl, the symbol of Korean culture.⁸⁸ Such perception was based on nationalistic attitudes that a word processor used to express han'gŭl was the responsibility of a Korean company.⁸⁹ *Araeahan'gŭl* was widely

⁸⁷ Joseph Sung-Yul Park, *The Local Construction of a Global Language, Ideologies of English in South Korea* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2009), 72.

⁸⁸ Kim Sang-pae, Kim Chin-yŏng, Yu Chi-yŏn, *segyehwasidae ūi ōnŏminjokchuŭi wa chŏngbo hwa chŏllyak*, Korea Information Society Development Institute: Kwach'ŏn, 2002, <http://www.itfind.or.kr/Report/200301/IITA/IITA-0656/IITA-0656.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

used, sporting about 75% of the word processor market share, an unprecedented figure in the world.⁹⁰ However, the company experienced financial troubles in the late 1990s and announced an agreement with Microsoft on June 15 that would cease any future development of *Araeahan'gŭl* in exchange for an investment from Microsoft. In the immediate aftermath, a mass civil movement aided by the Korea Venture Business Association and Korean language groups including Korean Language Society formed the Association for Saving the Korean Word Processor Movement. It gathered more than 130,000 signatures opposing the deal within 13 days and raised about KRW 10 billion (USD 5,000,000).⁹¹ On July 20, the Association successfully took over Hancom. All in all, the movement was a national and nationalistic movement based on the premise of protecting not only a domestic industry but han'gŭl and the pride of Koreans.

At the same time, the nature of identity was different. While Korean in the past was utilized to form a sense of unity within its speakers to undergird national competitiveness, Korean in globalization has become its own manifestation; competitiveness on its own as Korean has proliferated abroad with globalization as a platform. There were several attempts in “language export,” where han'gŭl was adopted as a written script for foreign spoken languages. The adoption of han'gŭl by the Cia-Cia people in Baubau, Buton Island of Indonesia in 2009 and Guadalcanal and Malaita provinces of the Solomon Islands in 2012 were two main examples that met much media fanfare in Korea. The case of the Solomon Islands, in particular, was described as “a corroborative case that shows the possibility of han'gŭl's globalization” and “putting the

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ At USD 1 = KRW 2000.

spotlight back on the scientific nature and excellence of han'gŭl."⁹² Additionally, the number of foreigners learning Korean has been highlighted. According to the Ministry of Education, the number of students learning Korean has increased 17% from 77,712 to 93,144 students in 1,111 schools in 26 countries⁹³ Also, a researcher from the National Institute of Korean Language noted that the number of foreigners learning Korean at King Sejong Institute throughout the world has increased by 58 times in the eight years of the institute's existence since 2007 from 740 to 43,300 in 2015.⁹⁴ The rapid growth in interest for learning Korean has been often attributed to Korea's rising soft and hard power. The researcher called for a plan to modernize Korean language education in order to augment Korea as a "cultural power" in the era of multicultural and globalized society.⁹⁵ Korean has become a "Korean utensil" while serving as the Korean body.

All in all, the place of Korean in Korean identity has been immortalized through memorials. An oversized statue of King Sejong of the Chosŏn Dynasty, the creator of the Korean script han'gŭl who is revered as the greatest leader in Korean history, was firmly and conspicuously placed in the iconic Gwanghwamun Plaza in 2009 prior to the unveiling of the plaza's restoration. Additionally, the newly established government administrative center, Sejong City, was named in his honor in 2012. These lasting monuments commemorating the creator of han'gŭl firmly planted the Korean language as part of the Korean identity.

⁹² Ch'a Chi-yŏn, "<tubŏntchae 'han'gŭl such'ul'...han'gŭlhan'gŭl such'ul'...han'gŭl kwahaksŏng · ususŏng chumok>," *Yonhap News*, October 8, 2012, accessed January 29, 2018, <http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2012/10/08/0200000000AKR20121008168600004.HTML>.

⁹³ "Ch'oegŭn 3nyŏn kan haeoe(kukkabyŏl) ch'och'o·chungdŭnghakkyo han'gugŏbanhan'gugŏban kaesŏl hyŏnhwang (2014.11.31kijun)," Ministry of Education, accessed January 29, 2018, <http://www.moe.go.kr/boardCnts/fileDown.do?m=040103&s=moe&fileSeq=7e76d7beae3de3344284804065a3e4b>.

⁹⁴ Sin Yu-ri, "han'gugŏhan'gugŏ paeunŭn oegugin 8nyŏn mane 58paero...kyoyuk chŏnmunhwa haeya," *Yonhap News*, February 9, 2017, accessed January 29, 2018, <http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2017/02/09/0200000000AKR20170209185000371.HTML>.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

Conclusion

Seeking national competitiveness, two very different leaders in different era both utilized their language ideology to exhort the people to contribute. The dictatorial Park Chung-hee regime formulated the ideology of externalization to imbue a sense of unity while attempting to erase traces of foreign language in the Korean body by suppressing “impure” foreign linguistic elements in Korean. It imbued a sense of unspeakable-ness of English by pegging it as incongruent to national identity. On the other hand, Kim Young-sam’s democratically-elected government formulated the ideology of necessitation through *Segyehwa* by pegging English as an integral part of the administration’s conscious effort to integrate Korea to the ongoing globalization of the world. While *Segyehwa* included the state’s language policy that introduced and necessitated English, it was the Asian Financial Crisis that hammered in a sense of uncertainty and precariousness that made English an unspeakable language in a sense that it created anxiety. The Asian Financial Crisis led people to believe that their nation was not as robust as they believed it to be. Instead, it was helplessly reliant on the international community. As a result, English became a practical and symbolic tool that people sought to cling on as a social safety net.

CHAPTER 3: PTC'S PUBLIC ENGLISH EDUCATION REFORM PLAN

Background

On December 19, 2007, conservative Grand National Party candidate Lee Myung-bak won a landslide victory in the presidential election with the highest voter turnout in history, signaling a sweeping transition from ten years of progressives at the helm of the executive office to a conservative president-elect who embraced neoliberalism and free competition. Following his victory, a poll indicated that 81.3% of those surveyed had high hopes for his administration.⁹⁶ Much of the hope was grounded in his promise to bring economic revitalization, particularly at a time of global uncertainty with the U.S. subprime mortgage crisis that began in December 2007. As he was a former CEO of a major conglomerate Hyundai Engineering and Construction and a relatively popular mayor of Seoul. His supporters counted on his business-mindedness and can-do attitude. The latter in particular had earned him a nickname “bulldozer” when he was mayor of Seoul. He had pushed aside his critics to swiftly restore *ch'ŏnggyech'ŏn*, which not only became a popular recreational stream in the center of Seoul that had been formerly buried under transportation infrastructure, but a positive facelift of the city often asserted as elevating concrete-block Seoul as a global city with a global mindset consisting of environmental and recreational conscious similar to the Central Park in New York.

During his election campaign, then-candidate Lee promised economic revitalization with the slogan 747; the first 7 for achieving 7% annual GDP growth, 4 for surpassing USD 40,000 per capita, and the latter 7 for becoming the seventh largest economy in the world during his

⁹⁶ Yi Hyŏn-chŏng, “<insuwi han tal②>sae chŏngbu ch'ejiljŏnhwanch'ejiljŏnhwan e 'uryŏ'to,” *Newsis*, January 27, 2008, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://news.naver.com/main/read.nhn?mode=LSD&mid=shm&sid1=100&oid=003&aid=0001939174>.

term. He pledged to do so by promoting “small government, large market” and “business-friendly” government,⁹⁷ congruent with conservative neoliberal values. One major reform he sought was in the education sector as one close to the president-elect said, “in the mind of president-elect Lee, the reorganization of the government structure and education reform are the biggest issues” and that “from now on, we will show more interest in reforming the education system.”⁹⁸ His overarching education plan was two-folded.

He pledged to reform the public English education system to reduce the KRW 14 trillion (approximately USD 15 billion at the time) yearly spending on private English education.”⁹⁹ He reportedly believed that reducing the private education spending was likely to be more effective than any other economic policy, and this reflects the president-elect’s realization that “a success in economics cannot be achieved without success in education, and that economic stability and economic development can only be achieved if the “money-eating hippopotamus” is caught.”¹⁰⁰

On the other hand, he revealed his intention to benchmark Hong Kong’s education system that provides elementary school graduates with a two-month long English instruction of “six years of elementary school lessons in all subjects prior to entering middle school.”¹⁰¹ Also in-line with his emphasis on English education, on December 26, 2007, he appointed Lee Kyung-sook, the former chancellor of Sookmyung Women’s University, who implemented

⁹⁷ Na Jeong-ju, “Lee Pledges Tax Cuts, Public Sector Reform,” *The Korea Times*, February 25, 2008. accessed February 4, 2018, http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/tech/2017/06/693_19596.html.

⁹⁸ Han Sang-u, [taeip chayurhwa 案 ttüdüboni] chayulssöng puyö ro kyöngjaengnyökh kanghwa,” *Seoul Shinmun*, January 23, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.seoul.co.kr/news/newsView.php?id=20080123002012>.

⁹⁹ Kim Söng-su, [taeip chayurhwa 案 ttüdü poni] han’gukhyöng t’oik-t’op’ülhan’gukhyöng t’oik-t’op’ül mandünda,” *Seoul Shinmun*, January 23, 2008, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://www.seoul.co.kr/news/newsView.php?id=080123003006>.

¹⁰⁰ Han Sang-u, [taeip chayurhwa 案 ttüdüboni] chayulssöng puyö ro kyöngjaengnyökh kanghwa,” *Seoul Shinmun*, January 23, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.seoul.co.kr/news/newsView.php?id=20080123002012>.

¹⁰¹ Hwang Kye-sik, “insuwi ‘yöngö chun kongyong hwa rodümaep mwön’gamwön’ga,” *Segye Ilbo*, January 23, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.segye.com/content/html/2008/01/23/20080123002500.html>.

mandatory English speaking and writing tests for the university's graduates and was the first to introduce TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) in Korea,¹⁰² as the chair of the PTC, which was tasked with ensuring a smooth administrative transition before the inauguration and coordinating the new administration's plans on December 26, 2007.

The floodgate of the public English education reform opened rather unceremoniously on January 22, 2008. The chairwoman had first briefed the press on the new administration's plan to reform the college admission process and the National College Scholastic Ability Test and left the briefing room. Out in the hallway, a reporter asked: "is teaching general subjects in English a possibility?" She offered a simple but a watershed answer, stating "that is a possibility."¹⁰³ The PTC's consideration of English immersion was further confirmed when Lee Chu-ho, another senior member of the PTC as an executive member of the Social, Educational & Cultural Subcommittee stated that English immersion will be implemented as a pilot starting in rural areas.¹⁰⁴

Teaching general subjects in English, which largely became known as English immersion, was part of the PTC's broader public English education reform plan officially known as "Plan for Strengthening English Public Education." The plan mainly stipulated that the PTC would implement teaching English in English (TEE) in all high schools by 2010. In the meantime, the PTC planned to conduct English immersion pilot tests in selected high schools

¹⁰² Sŏng Yŏn-ch'ŏlch'ŏl, Hwang Chun-pŏm, "Lee Kyung-suk "orenji anira orinji"," *Hankyoreh*, January 30, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/266659.html>.

¹⁰³ Yu Sin-chae, "Lee Kyung-suk insuwŏnwŏnjang ūi kwayok?" *Hankyoreh*, January 28, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/266168.html>, Yu Sin-chae, "'yŏngŏ morip' ttŭiwŏt taga panbal e "kŭrŏn kyehoek palk'inpalk'in chŏk ŏpta" palppaem," *Hankyoreh*, January 28, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, <http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/PRINT/266240.html>.

¹⁰⁴ Sŏn Kŭn-hyŏng, "insuwi "yŏngŏ moripkyoyuk an handa"...tangch'otangch'o ipchang pŏnbok," *Hankyoreh*, January 28, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=200801281852435&code=940401#csidx2bf1e3561a7be90af7d1eb8882a9725.

and possibly some middle and elementary schools in 2008, which would include subjects “easier to understand in English” such as mathematics, science, art, music, and physical education. The PTC also announced that its English immersion would be first implemented in “autonomous high schools,” which has more autonomy in curriculum and operation compared to ordinary high schools and rural high schools including “public boarding schools” to provide educationally underprivileged regions with more English education. Additionally, it likely had planned to introduce English immersion in elementary school subjects such as mathematics, science, art, music, and physical education after 2013.

The PTC reasoning for its public English education reform plan was largely based on the ideology of necessitation. It claimed that its public English education reform plan including English immersion and TEE in public schools will enhance national competitiveness as well as lessen class inequality and social anxiety arising from private education spending and studying abroad. Although there was some support, the PTC was met with fierce criticisms with doubts over the incoming administration’s readiness to implement such massive overhaul in education, as well as doubts over the plan’s effectiveness as an education and a social policy. The PTC reneged on its plan to implement English immersion on January 28 although it vowed to implement TEE.

Ideology of Necessitation

The main motive behind the PTC’s public English education reform was based on the ideology of necessitation. Out of all quotes and media reports attributed to the PTC in relation to its public English education reform plan, 188 were categorized under the ideology of necessitation, or 60 percent of all PTC discourses. The PTC’s public English education reform

plan was essential in order to enhance national competitiveness and create a beneficial ripple effect on society by reducing parents' and students' anxiety and improving class equality as the government would provide equal and adequate education to all. These social benefits in turn would enhance national competitiveness. Hence, public English education reform was not merely an education issue, but a social issue. Therefore, the task of solving societal problems was the government's duty according to the PTC. In other words, it was the PTC's duty to provide a necessary public service of establishing a public English education system that would alleviate social problems while enhancing national competitiveness in the globalizing world.

Accordingly, Chairwoman Lee said, "It is time for the government to fundamentally take responsibility for the problem caused by English education" (Article ID 159) because economically, the government providing English immersion education would reduce the enormous private English education spending (Article ID 180) as the government would provide adequate and sufficient education for the public to make private education redundant. Socially, it would reduce the number of *kirogi* families (Article ID 180) and reduce parents' anxiety (Article ID 159). According to Chairwoman Lee, reducing the number of separated families as a result of studying abroad and parents' anxiety caused by their children's English education was the government's duty (Article ID 159) and a capable public English education would dampen the need for study abroad and eliminate the anxiety of parents. At the same time, the government taking the initiative with a sense of duty in providing adequate public English education would mean equal and high-quality education for all, hence the social equality. All in all, The PTC believed that the ability to converse in English was a necessary skill for national competitiveness (Article ID 107, 185, 179), particularly in the age of globalization (Article ID 185). The PTC considered public English education reform as a universal solution for enhancing national

competitiveness, economy, social equality, and education. The PTC regarded English as a necessity for the nation's economic competitiveness and solving domestic social problems, reflecting the strengthening of the ideology of necessitation.

Ideology of Externalization

How to promote national competitiveness?

A much smaller proportion of PTC's discourse fell under the ideology of externalization. Out of 317 quotes and media reports attributed to the PTC, only eight fell under the ideology of externalization. Nevertheless, these eight provide significant insight into gauging the PTC's beliefs about the ideology of externalization.

The PTC and its public English education reform plan did not merely strengthen the ideology of necessitation. It deviated from the ideology of externalization as Chairwoman Lee claimed, the PTC's public English education reform was going to be fundamentally different (Article ID 140) and "[we] will focus on the issue of English education as a national task for the next five years by benchmarking countries where English is an official language" (Article ID 237).

By benchmarking the countries where English is an official language, this meant that all citizens should learn to speak English for the sake of national competitiveness (Article ID 107, 185, 179). The PTC's plan was to overhaul the public English education system to enable students to speak conversational English (Article ID 185) just by graduating from high school (Article ID 115, 140, 237). It also meant incorporating English into daily life or providing a platform where one can encounter and speak English daily, naturally, and freely.

Chairwoman Lee's vision corroborated president-elect Lee's intention to benchmark Hong Kong, where English is an official language. Additionally, PTC consultant Hong Hu-cho also supported Chairwoman Lee's vision by stating "the new government's plan to strengthen English education is to expand foreign language education in line with the global age" and described the PTC's language policy as "improving the ability to use practical English such as listening and speaking in the short term, and enable [everyone] to have a command of an international language such as English and Chinese in the long term" (Article ID 185). English immersion was a part of a long-term education reform plan, which would cultivate students into English-speaking talents in the globalizing world. Hence, the PTC promoted its plan as an ideal method to cultivate such speaking ability as it meant could provide more chance to encounter English.

Importantly, English immersion had been generally implemented in countries that adopt English as a second language or as an official language, or where more than one language is used with one being English to promote bilingualism. The PTC's promotion for English immersion and plan to benchmark countries where English is an official language showed that the PTC intended to create a bilingual environment where both Korean and English may be spoken. This is a significant encroachment of the ideology of externalization. English was an unspeakable language that was only learned for the purpose of competitiveness. However, the PTC planned to make it a speakable language in a sense that a Korean person may speak it in Korea and that should no longer considered a source of anxiety.

Where to Speak English? PTC's Greet and Meet in English

Chairman Lee Kyung-sook: "Good morning"

President-elect Lee Myung-bak: “Is not Good Morning English in the first grade of elementary school?”

On the morning of January 31, Chairwoman Lee Kyung-suk greeted president-elect Lee in English as the president-elect was getting off a car to attend a PTC meeting held in Samcheong-dong (Article ID 291). Albeit this English “conversation” was short and may appear trivial, this episode staged by Chairwoman Lee that provided a telling illustration of the PTC’s long-term vision; English may be spoken in Korea amongst Koreans. Furthermore, the fact that it occurred outside of English-learning environment was a significant deviation from the ideology of externalization.

Under the ideology of externalization, a Korean individual would not converse with a fellow Korean in English at home or abroad, and speaking English in Korea amongst Koreans was seen as incongruent to Korean identity as English is considered an external language. As a tool, English was to be used in Korea or abroad to interact with foreigners. This may also be the case in countries that are not generally considered to have a strong linguistic pride. Even in the case of countries like the United States, which is not generally known for a strong linguistic pride, English monolingualism viewed “the use of foreign languages with negative characteristics and motivations, including lack of patriotism, divided loyalties, and unwillingness to ‘assimilate.’”¹⁰⁵ In the Korean context, however, speaking English amongst Koreans was against national identity. The ideology of externalization obliged Koreans, including individuals with English fluency, to “suppress” English and behave as illegitimate speakers of English

¹⁰⁵ Thomas Ricento, “Language Policy, Ideology, and Attitudes in English-Dominant Countries,” In *The Oxford Handbook of Sociolinguistics*, edited by Robert Bayley, Richard Cameron, and Ceil Lucas (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 8.

because “a high level of English indexes a close alignment with English and the identity it represents.”¹⁰⁶ In other words, through feigning incompetence, the Otherness of English is highlighted and that English is an external language that does not belong to Koreans.¹⁰⁷ A Korean proficient in English would and should not flaunt one’s skill as it would be considered boasting. Chairwoman Lee, a speaker of English, strayed from these demands of the ideology of externalization.

Furthermore, the ideology of externalization defined the Korean language is “an essential component of a Korean identity and the identity indexed by English is not merely different but against the idea of Koreanness.”¹⁰⁸ In practice, Korean individuals “disclaim English,” “distance themselves from English,” and deny “association with English and the symbolic identity it represents.”¹⁰⁹ Claiming ownership, which is “indexed by competence,”¹¹⁰ of English is considered closely aligning with English. In other words, English was not a language for communicative purpose amongst Koreans unless in a learning environment, but a tool used for communicating with non-Korean speakers. This episode staged by a president-elect and a high-ranking government official, arguably the two most powerful people in the nation at the time was a symbolic gesture of promoting English as a speakable language and far from “disclaiming” or “distancing” themselves from English as delineated by the ideology of externalization. The conversation was not only seen by subordinates and onlookers but reverberated with and imagined by millions of citizens through media. Furthermore, Chairwoman Lee was not the only member of the PTC speaking English. PTC members also greeted each other by saying “kut

¹⁰⁶ Joseph Sung-Yul Park, *The Local Construction of a Global Language, Ideologies of English in South Korea* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2009), 125.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. 114.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 77.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 218.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 163.

moning” (good morning) instead of saying “annyŏnghaseyo” (hello). Greetings like “hau a yu” (how are you) also trickled out.

In sum, English is “a language from which one must distance oneself.”¹¹¹ Moreover, the action and the words of Chairwoman Lee showed that not only English is a necessary language, but a language that can be spoken amongst Koreans in a capacity outside of learning environment.

What type of English can you speak in Korea?

When the PTC envisioned a bilingual society where citizens should feel free to speak English in Korea, what type of English did it envision? Simply teaching and learning to speak English in English was insufficient to teach “proper” English pronunciation.

At the “Public English Education Roadmap Hearing” on January 30, Chairwoman Lee said that revising and correcting foreign language orthography is being examined so that English communication is not hindered by pronunciation: “Unless the English orthography does not change drastically, it will be difficult to pronounce [English] like a native speaker” and “we also have to plan revising and correcting the NIKL’s foreign language orthography.” She added her own experience by saying, “When I was in the US, I initially asked for an “orenji (orange), but [they] did not understand. So I said “orinji” (changed the pronunciation from ‘l’ to ‘r’) and [they] understood” (Article ID 171, 172). In Chairwoman Lee’s view, improving Koreans’ English pronunciation closer to American English was grounded on the ideology of necessitation as according to her experience, Americans were not able to comprehend her English with Korean

¹¹¹ Ibid. 125.

accent. The PTC's promotion of English-speaking Koreans not only consisted Koreans speaking English amongst each other, but the type of English Koreans should speak.

Essentially, Chairwoman Lee promoted Koreans to speak American English instead of speaking English in Korean accent, or how English is written in han'gŭl. It was an attempt to eradicate the Korean accent when speaking in English and when mixing English loan words with Korean. However, under the ideology of externalization, even "a close approximation of American English becomes an object of criticism" as "mixing English words into an otherwise monolingual conversation" and "approximating a closer pronunciation to traditional native-speaker varieties" were often considered as boasting and incongruent to national language identity. Therefore, a Korean individual talking in English, especially with an American English pronunciation, which is the most desired "type" of English, with another Korean individual would imply a betrayal of the ideology of externalization. Chairwoman Lee's proposal to change the English loanword orthography was to eradicate and barricade the traces of Korean local English, which is a part of Korean language identity as delineated by the ideology of externalization. In other words, speaking pure American English should not be considered incongruent to national language identity or seen as boasting. Chairwoman Lee's reasoning to change the English orthography not violates the ideology of externalization. Overall, the PTC's promotion of pure American English pronunciation was a dictate on how Koreans should speak, which was without a trace of Korean linguistic identity. Combined with the PTC's envision of English as an official language, its English ideology was far from the enclosure of the ideology of externalization.

At the same time, Chairwoman Lee's implication of the National Institute of Korean Language (NIKL) was significant considering the current and the past functions of the agency.

The NIKL, as discussed in Chapter 2, was Park Chung-hee regime's apparatus that oversaw the state's formulation of linguistic nationalism and language purification movement. Additionally, while its nationalistic attitude toward the Korean language has certainly toned down since its heyday, it still issues a list of purified words and their corresponding neologies. Furthermore, it had previously unilaterally and arbitrarily declared the new Romanization system in 2000 without consultation from non-Korean linguists,¹¹² which had been criticized for its nationalistic color. The current chairperson's message on its website states the organization's duty to ascertain the current environment the Korean language is facing in order to implement appropriate language policy and lay the foundation for integrating the Korean language in preparation for the reunification [with North Korea].¹¹³ Contrarily, Chairwoman Lee's stance that the NIKL should accommodate English by revising the Korean orthography to "properly" pronounce English words in addition to the PTC's public English education reform was a coup against the mission of the NIKL.

What was the NIKL's opinion on the PTC's English reform plan? It was largely a sideline spectator until Chairwoman Lee floated the idea of the NIKL revising the English to Korean orthography on January 30. On the same day, NIKL Chairman Lee Sang-kyu was asked about the PTC's public English education reform plan over a phone interview with the media, where the chairman hesitantly discussed the importance of improving the overall Korean language skills among the citizens: "Prior to establishing English education and language policy,

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¹¹³ "Insamal," *National Institute of Korean Language*, accessed February 4, 2018, https://www.korean.go.kr/front/page/pageView.do?page_id=P000024&mn_id=71.

we must seriously reflect the situation that that elementary school students' Korean language skills are declining.”¹¹⁴

Perhaps, the chairman feared political repercussion. Regardless, the role of the NIKL, past and present, was to promote the use of Korean. The PTC's plan surely would have lessened the exposure of the Korean language to students due to the increasing the amount of English use in public schools. While the PTC promoted such measure, the NIKL, which should have been at the forefront of opposition, failed to “protect” the Korean language.

Wing of the Korean Nation

Through its public English education reform plan, the PTC envisioned a nation where all citizens can speak English; outside of school enclosures using American English pronunciation. Nevertheless, English was a not a replacement for Korean, but a language that should co-exist. The following quote made by Chairwoman Lee on January 30 at a public hearing for the “Public English Education Roadmap” sums it up well: “There is no greater nation than our own citizens, but it has been deprived of a wing. If simply graduating from high school leads to [English] communication skills, [our citizens] can become citizens of a first-tier nation on the international stage and national competitiveness is enhanced” (Article ID 281).

In Chairwoman Lee's view, English not only enhances national competitiveness but elevates the status of the nation and its people. It was the incoming administration's responsibility to set the foundation for the future generations of workers to be trained to elevate the nation on the world stage. Additionally, all citizens should be able to speak English after 12

¹¹⁴ Son Che-min, “yŏngŏ konggyoyuk kanghwa e ap'sŏ kugŏnŭngnyŏk chŏha koryŏ haeya,” *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, January 31, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=200801301849015&code=100203.

years of compulsory education. As disclosed by the PTC in the previous week, the PTC envisioned Koreans speaking American English as not just with foreigners, but as a second language used amongst themselves, outside of school enclosures, and with American English.

Chairwoman Lee's statement also offered insight into the conflicting dichotomy between the Korean body and Western utensils. In her statement, Chairwoman Lee used the word *minjok* (nation) for the first time while promoting the PTC's public English education reform. This is noteworthy because as the era of authoritarian rule winded down paving the way for democracy in Korea, the word *minjok* was slowly replaced by *kungmin*, (citizen) or *uri* (us, our).¹¹⁵ At the same time, it is an emphasis on the homogeneity of the Korean nation consisting of one race, one ethnicity, and one language. Her choice to use the word *minjok* was reminiscent of the role of ethnic identity as the mobilizing ideology and the driver for the state's goal of building national competitiveness during Korea's economic modernization and *Segyehwa* in the latter half of the twentieth century.

This perhaps was an attempt to garner support by reminding the public how Korea had struggled for national competitiveness in the past. At the same time, it showed that the PTC's vision does not mean that the Korean language is no longer considered an important marker of Korean identity or English has overtaken the Korean language as the language of the nation. As a Korean *minjok*, speaking Korean was still one of the most important aspects of being a "genuine" Korean,¹¹⁶ and Korean nonetheless was to remain as the national language. However, in the era of globalization, the PTC believed that Korean *minjok* that had painstakingly attained

¹¹⁵ Chŏng A-ran, Han Un-hŭi, <pikteit'ŏpikteit'ŏ ro pon kwangbok 70nyŏn> ②yŏktae taet'ongnyŏngtaet'ongnyŏng hwadu, t'ongilt'ongil·kyŏngje," *Yonhap News*, August 11, 2015, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://www.yonhapnews.co.kr/bulletin/2015/08/09/0200000000AKR20150809027200033.HTML>.

¹¹⁶ Kim Jiyeon, "National Identity under Transformation: New Challenges to South Korea," *The Asan Forum*, January 25, 2014, accessed January 15, 2016, <http://www.theasanforum.org/national-identity-under-transformation-new-challenges-to-south-korea/>.

one of the most rapid economic modernizations in the world needed to continue modernizing, or globalizing in this case, needed the “wing.” This was a way of elevating English. English was no longer a tool, but an essential part of the organic Korean body. In contrast, the Korean language is often referred to as the “soul.” In Chairwoman Lee’s view, the citizens of the great Korean nation speak Korean that represents the soul of the nation but at the same time, also capable of speaking English as the wing in order to continue making strides in the era of globalization. The wing according to the PTC was attainable through an eventual society where English can be freely spoken.

Conclusion

This chapter showed the PTC’s English ideology by examining its discourse surrounding its public English education reform plan. The PTC’s reasoning behind its public English education reform plan was based on the ideology of necessitation. At the same time, the PTC’s method was to cultivate a bilingual setting by implementing English immersion modeled after countries that use English as a second or an official language. The PTC revealed that it had no intention of confining English within the enclosures of school grounds or foreigners, constructing English as a “speakable language” through its actions. Although the PTC’s public English education reform plan did not put forth a policy or prediction what will happen outside of school grounds, PTC showed that speaking English, American English in particular, in Korea outside of learning environment was congruent with Korean identity.

CHAPTER 4: THE PUBLIC'S ENGLISH IDEOLOGY AND THE KOREAN LANGUAGE

Background

It is also worth looking at the English ideology of the public and non-PTC government officials expressed during the PTC's promotion of its public English education reform plan. The plan was heavily criticized by parents, teachers, and education specialists. In fact, 86 percent of opinions coded disagreed with the PTC's argument that the public English education reform plan would ameliorate class inequality and social anxiety rooted in English education. Additionally, Korean language groups and a small number of journalists were critical of the PTC's disregard for the Korean language while promoting its public English education reform plan. However, the public's criticism against the PTC based on the ideology of externalization was much smaller proportionally compared to the ideology of externalization (266 vs. 33). On the other hand, there were much discussion about the feasibility of the PTC's reform plan (224 quotes and media reports coded) and interestingly, critics often shared the PTC's English ideology that English was necessary for Korea.

Additionally, the PTC was generally receptive to criticisms raised by the members of the public. It addressed and responded to a variety of concerns on class equality, social anxiety, and feasibility of the public English education reform plan. However, the PTC did not respond, at all, to various criticisms pertaining to the Korean body. As critics contended that the PTC's public English education plan will obliterate the Korean language, culture, and identity, and likened the PTC's plan to historical toadyism to China and colonial language policy

implemented by Japanese colonial rulers, the PTC remained silent. In the past, the state was the proactive architect and protector of national identity.

On the other hand, there was significant support for the PTC's public English education reform from the public, which showed that the PTC's English ideology was not an anomalous idea floated around by chance. Some expressed outright support for the PTC's public English education reform plan, and many others expressed hope that it would be implemented in the future with better preparation and planning.

Criticism

Criticisms from General Public

The PTC's public English education reform plan took a plenty of criticisms from a variety of people and perspectives. Journalists, teachers, education specialists, and parents criticized the PTC's claim that its reform plan will ease class inequality and parents' anxiety. However, the main contention was the PTC's readiness in implementing its plan.

Critics refuted the PTC's claim that its public English education reform would level class inequality. According to the Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union, the plan would only solidify educational polarization and double the private education spending.¹¹⁷ Furthermore, its spokesperson added that it would pressure students and aggravate parents' finances (Article ID 120). A parents' association also criticized the PTC's education plan, pointing out that it would only benefit private schools as anxious parents' are already heading to private schools for consultations (Article ID 120).

¹¹⁷ Yi Kyōng-wōn, "sae kyoyukchōngch'aek pip'an kyoyukchōngch'aek pip'an siwi it ttara," *Seoul Shinmun*, January 26, 2008, accessed May 11, 2016, <http://www.seoul.co.kr/news/newsView.php?id=080126008003>.

On the other hand, the most significant subject of criticism was the feasibility of implementing the PTC's public English education plan (145 criticisms out of 224 Program categories). Critics including education specialists and teachers predominantly cited unpreparedness of the PTC to implement such a massive overhaul of the public education system. Some school officials heavily criticized the PTC's plan, stating that public education is not the same as the *Cheonggyecheon* project and the PTC should not push through with English Immersion like a "bulldozer," and an English teacher even pointed out that teachers will have to attend private education schools for English (Article ID 147). Others focused on the daunting, if impossible, the task of procuring a sufficient number of teachers capable of teaching in English. Education specialists pointed out that out of the current 14,701 English teachers, less than half are capable of teaching in English, and it would be impossible to implement the PTC's plan by 2010. One high school teacher noted while casting the PTC's plan in a favorable light by saying that the intent of the PTC was agreeable, the preparation time was insufficient as there were not enough teachers (Article ID 93). According to a survey conducted by the Korean Federation of Teachers' Associations, 60% of kindergarten, primary, and secondary teachers opposed holding English-only classes, mainly citing the inability to provide in-depth lessons in English.¹¹⁸

Another issue the critics pointed out was the potential inefficacy of the school lessons in English. A teacher from a school that had already implemented all-English education pointed out that many students struggle to keep up with class lessons in Korean. Therefore, even if there is a

¹¹⁸ Ch'oe Kyōng-chun, "'insuwi chal handa 69%' chach'anchach'an haetchiman..., kyosa 60% yōngōsuōp pandae," *OhmyNews*, January 27, 2008, accessed April 19, 2016, http://www.ohmynews.com/NWS_Web/view/at_pg.aspx?CNTN_CD=A0000821404. Kim Chōng-ūn, "kyosa 60% 'yōngōsuōp pandae'," *Korea Economic Daily*, January 27, 2008, accessed April 19, 2016, <http://www.hankyung.com/news/app/newsview.php?aid=2008012786541>.

teacher capable of teaching in English, many of the students would struggle to keep up with class materials taught in English (Article ID 73).

The question of the effectiveness of the PTC's public English education reform plan, regardless of qualified teachers, is a key argument related to the PTC's English ideology. While teachers and educational experts accepted that "increasing the budget for public English education and strengthening practical English education" are on the right track, they expressed concern over the PTC's plan by calling it "unrealistic" and "dangerous" because it is not a proper method of education in an environment where English is used as a 'foreign language' and not as an 'official language' (Article ID 138). An article also noted that English is a foreign language, rather than an official language or a language for everyday use (Article ID 220). Immersion education is a method used in countries that use English as an official language such as Singapore and Hong Kong. As Pak Kō-yong, Professor of English Education stated, "Immersion education was developed in French-speaking Quebec" and "The effectiveness of English immersion [in Korea] is questionable as only Korean is spoken outside of school enclosure." (Article ID 48). Additionally, an editorial noted that "countries that learn English as a foreign language do not implement such type [English immersion] of education" (Article ID 129). Whether the PTC was aware or unaware, its English ideology and intention to implement English immersion were visions of Korea as a bilingual nation where English can be spoken without qualms about the ideology of externalization.

Criticisms Pertaining to Korean Language & Identity

On the other hand, a small set of contention against the PTC's public English education reform plan was about the Korean language and identity (33 coded under Ideology of

Externalization). Critics, mainly Korean language organizations, feared that the PTC's public English education reform plan was a step in the direction toward implementing English as an official language.

Korean language scholars and parents' groups warned English immersion would soon lead to English becoming an official language, which would only encourage even earlier enrollment in private education and lead to "quasi-Koreans" who cannot speak either Korean or English (Article ID 73). Additionally, a spokesperson for the Writers Association of Korea warned that the language policy of the incoming administration would reach for implementing English as an official language (Article ID 77). The fears were grounded in the fact that many considered the Korean language as an identity marker, or "soul" (Article ID 205) of the Koreans and saw the PTC's public English education reform plan as the colonization of the Korean language and identity (Article ID 35, 205). For them, language represents ideology and culture (Article ID 129, 73). Having public school classes taught in English meant not only change in the language of instruction but the way of living and character.

Most of these criticisms came on January 30, when Korean language academic society groups and civil society organizations led by Korean Language Solidarity Group held a press conference. They issued a joint statement sharply criticizing the PTC's public English education reform plan. They demanded the government to cease "English worshipping" and argued that English immersion will obliterate the Korean language and national identity, reduce individuals into competitors for global capital, amplify fear and increase spending on private education, and accelerate education inequality based on income gap (Article ID 219, 131, 219). The timing of their protest is noteworthy as it came two days after the PTC had already announced that it will no longer pursue English immersion, and after the peak of the debate. The concerns regarding

the Korean language were not only late to surface but were fairly limited as their protest was largely a one-time event consisting of a press conference, compared to other interest groups, parents, students, and education specialists who continued to voice their opinions throughout the selected time frame. Overall, questions and concerns regarding the Korean language and identity were rare, marginalized, and few and far between.

PTC Response to Criticisms

Amid a bevy of criticisms and concerns raised against its public English education reform plan, the PTC eagerly responded to the public, in particular to the criticisms regarding the PTC's preparedness to implement its proposed public English education reform plan (121 coded under Program). In regards to concerns that the ill-prepared public English education reform plan will stir up private English education, president-elect Lee responded that "there seems to be a misunderstanding" and "[the reform plan] was not poorly or suddenly put together. We are now announcing it after a lengthy examination" (Article ID 84). Spokesperson Lee also reiterated that the reform plan was a "planned policy" (Article ID 56) and Chairwoman Lee acknowledged the opposition against the PTC's work thus far, stating that she will she will convince the public in regards to the negative opinions (Article ID 178). Chairwoman Lee also lamented oppositions against the reform plan, stating that the public education standardization plan was a culmination of 10 to 20 years' worth of work and misunderstandings and anxieties are fueling misconceptions about the plan (Article ID 178).

Nevertheless, the PTC did not offer any remarks on concerns pertaining to Korean language and identity. The content analysis on news articles showed that the PTC eagerly responded to the public, 121 instances of quotes and media reports, however, none were related

to the identity issue. Perhaps, it was the PTC's belief that it was its patriotic duty to maintain and improve Korea's national competitiveness. The PTC's response, or lack thereof, on the potential effects of its plan on the Korean language and identity illustrated the PTC's lack of nationalistic language attitudes and its position on the Korean body. Furthermore, its lack of response also shows its English ideology. English is not only a necessary language, but it is not a language of the Other.

Support from Public

While most of the public's opinion were criticisms (76%) against the PTC's public English education reform plan, it is worth examining English ideology of its supporters as with all things considered, educational specialists, members of the public, and government officials supported the PTC and its public English education reform plan.

The supporters of the PTC echoed the PTC's claim that English is necessary for national competitiveness in the globalizing world, thus reinforcing the ideology of necessitation. They saw the PTC's overhaul of the public English education system was a way to finally overcome the deficient system that resulted in incompetent English speakers unfit for the globalizing world and a chance to break out of what was perceived as perpetually bad English speaking skills (Article ID 193). On the other hand, several education experts and professors in English education offered opinions from the education point of view. For some, the PTC's reform presented an opportunity to improve the inadequate English conversation skill (Article ID 254). Additionally, professor of English education Kwōn O-ryang from Seoul National University claimed that having class in English will immensely improve students English listening and speaking skills (Article ID 254). Another professor of English education Ch'oe In-ch'ōl from

Kyungpook National University stated that having class in English would provide English listening opportunities for students and it will be positive as students can speak to teachers only in English” (Article ID 254). Additionally, some supporters backed the PTC’s reform plan by refuting criticisms. One editorial argued against the plan’s potential negative impact on identity, arguing that Finnish, Swedish, and Danish citizens who start English education at a young age do not experience identity issues (Article ID 265). Furthermore, an article reported parents’ expectation that the PTC’s reform plan will enable English learning without “interference from the mother tongue” (Article ID 146) and allow English to be used like a “second official language” (Article ID 163). Even more importantly, many expressed support for the *eventual* implementation of English immersion (61 coded Conditional Support under Program).

A professor of sociology Kim Ho-gi of Yonsei University cautioned that while English lectures in universities represent a “global trend,” English immersion in elementary, middle, and high schools require a careful judgment as unpreparedness may lead to ineffectiveness (Article ID 2). On the other hand, English education professors training English teachers predicted that teaching English in English is realistic and would yield positive results if prepared meticulously (Article ID 66). Overall, many educators agreed with the PTC’s public English education reform plan that focuses on enhancing and expanding the English education curriculum to focus on conversation skills.

On the other hand, Professor of English education Yi Kil-yŏng at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies agreed with the PTC’s English immersion plan and stated that Korea should follow the example of Malaysia by teaching limited subjects such as mathematics and science in English (Article ID 131). This echoes the PTC’s initial pledge to benchmark its English reform to the countries that use English as an official language. Additionally, Chŏng Un-ch’an, Seoul

National University economics professor and president of the university from 2002 to 2006 who later became the prime minister of Korea under Lee Myung-bak administration in 2009, expressed concern for “Korean-style English.” Although he disagreed with the PTC’s plan to implement English immersion, he agreed with the PTC’s plan to teach English in English stating that it makes sense to teach English in English, but not right to be taught by a Korean (Article ID 79). He aligned with the PTC’s vision that Koreans should speak pure English over authentic English. These views expressed by the English educators showed that the PTC’s English ideology was not an isolated brainstorm. It was not only the PTC that imagined the future of English speaking Koreans but the public as well. Furthermore, many supported the PTC’s reform plan at its core especially given that it was meticulously prepared.

Provincial and City (Non-PTC) Governments

Lastly, the PTC’s public English education reform plan also received support from regional governments. The extensive support shown by the regional governments illustrated that the PTC’s vision on public English education was shared by many in the various levels of administration. Furthermore, the education reform was not an issue strictly divided by political lines. Instead, it was desired across party lines although the level and the timing of implementation may have differed.

All 16 city and provincial superintendents requested president-elect Lee to gradually expand the number of English class hours and English immersion (Article ID 83). Additionally, while the PTC’s initial public English education reform plan was to implement teaching English in English and pilot English immersion in special and rural schools, major cities including Seoul, Incheon, and Busan and provincial governments including Jeju and South Chungcheong

announced their own plans to implement English immersion in public schools. Seoul Education Superintendent Kong Chōng-t'aek announced that the city will implement English immersion education in selected elementary and middle schools in Seoul beginning in 2008 (Article ID 269). The Seoul Metropolitan Office of Education also designated Gwangnam Elementary School as an “English Immersion Education Pilot School” and announced plans to implement English immersion in third and fourth-grade students beginning from March (Article ID 73). Incheon declared “English Free City,” visioning to foster its economic-free zones within the city to use English as an “ordinary” routine (Article ID 6). Jeju and South Chungcheong provinces also announced their plans to implement English immersion and teaching English in English (Article ID 73, 147). Lastly, education officials in Busan announced plans to expand existing English immersion from five elementary and one middle school to 11 elementary and two middle schools. Notably, the city education office believed that one of the reasons Singaporean and Malaysian students were proficient in English was because of English immersion (Article ID 285).

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the public’s English ideology through its response to the PTC’s public English education reform plan. While the PTC’s plan was much maligned by various groups, a number of critics did offer conditional support for the PTC’s public English education reform plan contingent on the feasibility—given that it is well-prepared. As one editorial noted, the perception of the public regarding the PTC’s plan was closer to gauging the possibility rather than thinking impossibility.¹¹⁹ Therefore, the PTC’s English ideology not an anomaly, but shared

¹¹⁹ Mun Sōng-ung, “yōngōgyoyuk, ol kōt i watta,” *Munhwa Ilbo*, January 29, 2008, accessed January 23, 2018, http://www.munhwa.com/news/news_print.html?no=2008012901033027161002.

by the public. At the same time, the PTC's lack of response to concerns pertaining to the Korean language potentially exemplified the PTC disregard for the traditional notion of Korean body.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The PTC's withdrew its plan to implement English immersion on January 28, 2008. President Lee himself announced on March 20 that "English immersion is something we should not do or cannot do"¹²⁰ and there has been no attempt to implement English immersion at a national level since. However, the conversation surrounding the controversial education policy remains as the debate over its affect on private education spending, class equality, and English learning continue to this day as the government even banned private elementary schools from providing English immersion education.¹²¹

Therefore, the PTC's English ideology should not be dismissed as one time happening, one administration's, or one person's anomalous and sudden idea. Yes, global economic climate combined with a business-minded, "bulldozer" administration facing high expectation may have played a role. Nevertheless, the PTC's English ideology was the culmination of a continual development of English ideology at work. Chairwoman Lee's remark that the PTC's reform plan been prepared for decades may or may not be true. Regardless, *Segyehwa* and the Asian Financial Crisis served as the foundation of the PTC's English ideology by creating a strong sense of the ideology of necessitation. That is, Korea cannot foster competitiveness without English. In the subsequent years, the state continually reinforced the ideology of necessitation through language policies that elevated and increased demand for English. Through the implementation of English education in public elementary schools, English-friendly regional government administration, and English villages, the state's English ideology transferred to

¹²⁰ Sŏn Kŭn-hyŏng, Yi Ko-ŭn, "[4t'ps-9-ch'ong-sŏn i-kŏs-i chaeng-chŏm]yŏng-ŏ-kyo-yuk, t'r-mol-ip-t' p'o-ki-t'ss bch-i-chung-sŏng non-lan," March 21, 2008, accessed April 26, 2018, http://news.khan.co.kr/kh_news/khan_art_view.html?artid=200803212358385&code=910113.

¹²¹ Kim Yŏn-chu, "dyonggmch'odŭnggyo 'yŏngŏ moripkyoyuk' kapchagi kŭmji nollan," *Chosun Ilbo*, October 2, 2013, accessed April 26, 2018, http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2013/10/02/2013100200176.html.

ordinary citizens. People responded by spending astronomical amounts on private English education and study abroad to meet the standard set by the state. Combined with the preexisting zeal for education, the government-defined individual success and the rise of neoliberal globalization produced incessant exposure to English as the norm in Korea. All in all, the state of English in Korea was ripe for the PTC's radical but expected public English education reform plan. While the PTC's rescinded its plans to examine the possibility of implementing English immersion, the reason was not that of the Korean body, but the feasibility. Lastly, although Chairwoman Lee was criticized by her own colleagues in the PTC for impromptu and impulsive statements, her blunt "truth" not hidden under political-correctness effectively unmasked the English ideology of the elites.

Furthermore, the subsequent emergence of English immersion schools in recent years shows that English immersion was neither an anomaly nor a product of an overzealous incoming administration compelled to make a splash. Elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as kindergartens employing English immersion in their curricula, have become more common in recent years. Additionally, universities are advertising the number of English-taught courses as a sign of their competitiveness and capability.

In an attempt to ascertain how the state promotes national competitiveness in the era of globalization, this thesis examined the state's English ideology through its public English education reform plan in 2008. The PTC's public English education reform plan demonstrated the ideology of necessitation as its stated goal was to enhance national competitiveness. At the same time, it was inherently different from prior language policies such as designating English-friendly zones, expanding public English education, and English immersion in selected schools as they were within the boundaries of the ideology of externalization. The PTC's reform plan

essentially was to establish English as a “speakable language” by paving a roadmap toward establishing English as an everyday language.

The PTC showed that by establishing speaking English amongst Koreans outside of school enclosures and using American English pronunciation as not a violation of the ideology of externalization, but actually something desired. Therefore, the state distanced itself from the ideology of externalization that confined English as an “unspeakable language.” On the other hand, the PTC was also nonchalant on criticisms based on the Korean language and identity imbued in the language. Nevertheless, as Chairman Lee’s English as a “wing” of the *minjok* statement indicated, the PTC’s English ideology considered possible bilingualism where Korean and English are not mutually exclusive but can coexist.

On the other hand, the Korean language remained firmly implanted as the linguistic identity of Korea. However, as the PTC seems to have disregarded the traditional notion of the Korean body by disassociating itself from Korean language groups’ criticisms, the Korean language may be serving another role as a tool for competitiveness. In globalization, Korean itself is becoming a competitive edge as its popularity symbolizes Korea’s economic power.

Accordingly, the state has adopted a position that neither matches Shin’s or Alford’s prediction, at least linguistically. Korean as an identity remains firmly planted. At the same time, English is increasingly becoming part of Korean identity. Perhaps, there is a middle ground between Shin’s and Alford’s dichotomous positions where globalization either tears down national and cultural identity or solidifies national and cultural identity. As Alford predicted, the Korean body digested English. Nevertheless, the Korean body remains intact. This amalgam may be the Korean identity, or as Christina Klein describes it, “authentic” Korea

in the era of globalization is not really Korean but also not really American.¹²² Therefore, “what thrived was not the substance of nationalism but its form—the narrative structure of celebrating and glorifying what was South Korean and what South Koreans had achieved”¹²³ The Korean body, Western utensils ideology remains incessantly preoccupied with enhancing national competitiveness. Perhaps, Koreans’ belief that they can take and improve other’s idea may be true after all.

¹²² Christina Klein, “Why American Studies Needs to Think about Korean Cinema, or, Transnational Genres in the Films of Bong Joon-Ho,” *American Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (2008).

¹²³ John Lie, *K-Pop: Popular Music, Cultural Amnesia, and Economic Innovation in South Korea* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 82.

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